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Soldiers' votes will decide who wins

Israel poll puts peace process under threat

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL'S election remained on a knife-edge last night, with the right-wing challenger, Binyamin Netanyahu, ready to cause a dramatic upset if votes of more than 100,000 serving Israeli soldiers confirm his slender lead over the incumbent Labour Prime Minister, Shimon Peres.

With many Israelis shocked and dismayed by the overnight change which enabled the Likud leader, 46, to reverse initial TV exit-poll predictions of a narrow win for Mr Peres, 72, the future of the Middle East peace process hung in the balance.

One leading Israeli political analyst told Israel Radio that it would take "a miracle of biblical proportions" if the absentee postal vote was to reverse the lead of 50.3 per cent to 49.6 per cent for Mr Netanyahu, or a total of just 21,399 votes after the count of all national ballot boxes was completed.

The counting of the postal returns of the 150,000 so-called "special voters" — the majority of whom are soldiers aged between 18 and 21 but who include Yitzhak Rabin's imprisoned assassin, Yigal Amir — will begin this morning. It will halt for 24 hours at sunset for the Jewish Sabbath if not complete, leaving the nail-biting to continue until a final result is announced on Sunday.

Commenting on the fitting symbolism that has left the outcome of the most critical poll in Israel's 48-year history in the hands of the young soldiers who fashion its image around the world, Chemi Shalev, another analyst, said: "If anybody had to decide these elections, perhaps it is the right thing that it is the soldiers. After all, they are the young people who have to pay the price of war. They are the young people who have to benefit from peace. I think, from an Israeli point of view, there is something morally



Netanyahu: harder line on the peace process

right about that." Ballots of hospital patients, seamen and diplomats will also go forward towards determining the final result. Traditionally, Israel's young soldiers have tended to back the Right.

The Labour Prime Minister remained out of the public eye yesterday, ordering all senior colleagues to refrain from comment until the official result is announced. But the strain was telling and the veteran peacemaker visited hospital for treatment of an eye infection. Many Israeli commentators predicted that the Nobel Peace prizewinner would soon stand down if he fails to reverse Mr Netanyahu's narrow lead.

Many inside Labour, including a distraught Leah Rabin, widow of the assassinated Prime Minister, blamed the collapse in Labour support on the refusal of party strategists to exploit the emotion surrounding Israel's first ever political killing during the low-key campaign.

The apparent victory of Mr Netanyahu would be a big blow to President Clinton, who had all but endorsed Mr Peres. Mr Clinton considers the US-brokered peace process one of his biggest foreign policy successes.

The acute symbolism of the army's deciding role in choosing the man who will lead Israel to the year 2,000 was increased by news, initially censored in Israel, that four

Israeli soldiers were killed in occupied south Lebanon yesterday and four others wounded in two roadside bomb ambushes by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah. They were the first Israelis killed in Lebanon since the ceasefire that ended Operation Grapes of Wrath.

The prospect of a right-wing victory sent shockwaves through the 2.2 million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza, many of whom are expecting the tough new security policies promised by Likud — including raids inside Palestinian police areas — as likely to prompt a new and more deadly intifada. Hamas said a right-wing victory would mean "war against the Palestinians and the Arabs".

Although Mr Netanyahu said through an aide that he would press ahead with the peace process, most commentators expect his future security policy to be influenced by hardline Cabinet members such as Ariel Sharon and Rafael Eitan.

The latter — who was army chief when hundreds of Palestinians were massacred in the refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon which Mr Sharon, then Defence Minister, masterminded — said yesterday that "every clause" of the 1993 peace deal with the Palestine Liberation Organisation should be reopened.

An employee at Jerusalem's luxury King David Hotel, summoned up many feelings when he waved a fist and shouted at colleagues: "No more Palestine. Arafat is finished."

Likud officials claimed that if Mr Netanyahu should emerge the winner, he would have no problem in forming a viable coalition during the 45-day period allowed to him. Negotiations with members of the unexpectedly successful religious parties are understood to have taken place.

Sharansky role, page 14
Leading article, page 10



Annie Morton, the model accused of being too thin, drinks beer and eats hamburgers, said her agent

Vogue model too thin for Omega

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN AND GRACE BRADBERRY

A/N advertiser has withdrawn from Vogue magazine in protest at the use of "distasteful" pictures of a "skeletal" model in its June edition.

Giles Rees, brand director of the Omega watch company, said he was appalled by pictures of the American girl Annie Morton modelling underwear, which he said could exert a harmful influence on impressionable readers.

"I thought it was irresponsible for a leading magazine which should be setting an example to select models of anorexic proportions... It made every effort to accentuate

ate their skeletal appearance," Mr Rees said. "Since Vogue presumably targets an audience which includes young and impressionable females, its creators must surely be aware that they will inevitably be influenced by what laughably passes for fashion in these pages."

Mr Rees added that the photographs were likely to encourage extreme weight loss at a time when an increasing number of young women and men were suffering from eating disorders. He said he did not believe that Omega, which uses the models Cindy Crawford and Elle Macpherson for its advertising campaigns, could benefit

from association with such pictures.

Joanna Vincent, director of the Eating Disorders Association, said: "While these sort of media images do not actually cause eating disorders, they contribute to the problem people have in recovering from anorexia or bulimia."

Anna Harvey, deputy editor of Vogue, said that the magazine was very aware of the problems associated with anorexia. "The model is not the slightest bit anorexic," Stephen Quinn, publisher of Vogue, said that Mr Rees's comments appeared to be motivated by sour grapes because he had objected to the way Omega watches had been

photographed for a feature in the magazine on watches.

David Bonnouvier of the New York agency which represents the 5'9" model, said: "She drinks beer, she eats McDonald's. She's never had a weight problem. Annie has a 34B bust, a 24-inch waist and 34-inch hips."

Dunblane police admit five-hour delay

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH AND STEPHEN FARRELL

PARENTS waited for up to five hours in a state of fear and confusion to hear whether their children had survived the massacre at Dunblane Primary School, the inquiry heard yesterday.

Detective Chief Superintendent John Ogg, in charge of the investigation into the shooting of 16 children and a teacher on March 13, admitted that with hindsight mistakes had been made.

Laura Dunlop, for the victims' families, told the inquiry on its second day of the anguish of the parents as they waited for hours for news. Police had not listed the names of the injured children who were taken to hospital because they did not want treatment delayed.

Teachers at the school were asked repeatedly to walk round the gym and identify the bodies. Mr Ogg said: "Understandably they kept breaking down. We had to keep giving them breaks."

As parents arrived they were split into two groups and those with children in Gwen Mayor's class were first taken to a private house near the school but at lunchtime were transferred by minibus to the school and left in a staffroom. They requested a briefing from a senior police officer but were told that nobody was available.

Superintendent Joseph Holden, in charge of looking after the families, denied that the families' request for a senior officer to give them news had been ignored. He had been unaware of such a request. Murmurs of discontent from the relatives in the gallery greened his claim that all the families had been informed between 1.45pm and 2.30pm.

Head's evidence, page 4

Sara Thornton walks free

Sara Thornton walked free from court yesterday after being convicted of manslaughter by stabbing to death her drunken husband and said that she had been fairly punished.

The jury of eight men and four women deliberated for six hours before substituting a verdict of manslaughter for Thornton's original murder conviction. The judge said he considered her not to be a danger to the public... Page 3



"Sorry, Iuv, it was yesterday"

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Ray of sunshine brightens May

Parts of Britain bathed in a heatwave yesterday, rescuing May from being remembered as one of the most miserable on record. Temperatures of up to 79°F (26°C) provided a flash of summer which drew sunbathers to beaches in the South, while the North East and Scotland were plagued with rain and cold winds.

Gravesend in Kent and Heathrow airport were among the hottest places in Britain. The outlook is cooler, though Met men believe June will be mostly sunny.

Photograph, page 22

Friend leaves Outback to be Blair's personal chaplain

BY ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR'S spiritual mentor has flown halfway round the world from his cattle ranch in Australia to be by the Labour leader's side in the run-up to the general election.

Peter Thomson, an Australian priest, has taken up a post at St Luke's in Holloway, north London. He applied for the post at the suggestion of the Labour leader, whose home in Islington is a ten-minute walk away.

Mr Thomson, one of Mr Blair's oldest friends, arrived three weeks ago and will act as a semi-official chaplain to the Labour leader during one of the most testing years of his life. He will return home after the election.

Mr Thomson's temporary home is a far cry from his 200-acre farm in the Australian Outback. He is living in a flat above a 1960s church meeting centre for alcoholics which is opposite the notorious Market council estate.

Mr Thomson, 60, was a mature theology graduate at St John's, Oxford, in 1972

when he met Mr Blair, a long-haired law undergraduate. "I remember the first time I met him in that Afghan coat," he said.

He introduced Mr Blair, who had no fixed political leanings, to the writings of John Macmurray, a 1920s Scottish philosopher, which converted Mr Blair to Christian socialism.

Mr Thomson has taken a keen interest in Mr Blair's progress. He told *New States-*



Thomson: introduced young Blair to socialism

man & Society: "When Tony became leader things started to happen. I was getting calls from London from people asking me about our relationship and it just became very exciting. I wanted to be part of it. So I talked to Tony and said that if I came to England I would want to be what I am, not to work directly in the political arena."

A few weeks ago Mr Blair telephoned to say that he had heard St Luke's required a clergyman. Mr Thomson, having discussed it with Lambeth Palace, was approved subject to receiving a visa.

The vicar turned cattle rancher has enjoyed a colourful life since he returned to his native Australia in 1974. He was removed from a curacy in Melbourne as a suspected communist and from a second post for setting up a scrap-metal businesses to create jobs in his parish. He was headmaster of Timberport, one of Australia's leading private schools, worked in the family estate agency, and read the news on Australian television.

Hostility to Europe is growing

BY PETER RIDDLE

THE public has become increasingly opposed to most proposals for closer integration of the European Union, but narrowly still favours continuing British membership, according to a MORI poll for *The Times*.

The majority oppose a single European currency and the transfer of more powers from national parliaments to the European Parliament and there has been a big shift of opinion against introducing a European supreme court.

The poll, undertaken last weekend after Britain began its policy of non-cooperation with Brussels, shows that the public is sharply divided on party, sex, class, income and age lines over Europe.

Readers of quality broadsheet papers, including those which take a sceptical editorial line about Europe, favour Britain staying in the EU by a big margin, while readers of tabloid papers on balance support leaving the EU.

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Water firms are told to pay customers who get cut off



Gummer: backed Ofwat

By NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A DROUGHT compensation scheme, forcing water companies to pay households £10 a day if they are cut off, was announced by the regulator yesterday.

Ian Byatt, Director-General of the Office of Water Services, criticised the industry for its level of leaks, claiming that many firms were losing more water than they did when they were first privatised.

The compensation package, which will force water companies also to pay £50 a day to businesses cut off by the drought, was immed-

ately backed by John Gummer, the Environment Secretary.

He said: "The public clearly regard it as unacceptable that where customers suffer interruptions in supply in circumstances in which these could have been avoided by a prudently managed company they receive no compensation, and so do I." Parliamentary time means that the package is unlikely to be made law during this session or in time for this summer.

But Mr Gummer said he would be looking at ways of extending the industry's existing compensation scheme, which covers non-drought related interruptions, to cover

drought breakdowns during 1996. Janet Langdon, director of the Water Services Association, which represents the big water companies, said: "Our member companies totally accept the principle of compensation and, over and above their mandatory obligations, companies have their own customers' charters to provide compensation on those rare occasions when things go wrong. The water industry is on course for achieving the biggest reduction in leakage in its history."

But Bridget Prentice, part of Labour's environment team, attacked the industry, the regulator

and the Government for failing to deliver "a clean, regular and efficient supply of water". The situation was "getting worse not better", she said. "What exactly has the regulator been doing? How have water companies been allowed to get away with this?"

Ms Prentice called for an immediate end to takeovers, which Labour claims is diverting companies from their basic job of water and sewage services.

On leaks, the Ofwat report claims that many companies are leaking as much if not more water from pipes than when they were privatised in 1989. Mr Byatt said

that unless the situation was resolved companies would soon face legally binding targets. If those were not met, water companies could begin losing their licences after 1998.

The regulator's stand on leaks, signalling an increasing resolve by his office to get tough with water companies in the face of another summer of drought, was also given unreserved support by Mr Gummer. "I have made clear that I regard levels of leakage as unacceptable and stand ready to use my powers to set standards of performance," he said.

Several water companies are

attacked in the report for failing to meet their leakage targets and for being unable to demonstrate that they can run systems efficiently. A total of 855 million gallons of water leaked from water pipes and mains in England and Wales every day in 1994-95 or 161 million gallons more than targets agreed in 1989 at privatisation. The shortfall is equivalent to the daily needs of four million people.

Among the so-called "Big Ten", only Anglian, North West and Southern Water have met their targets, with only Anglian and Southern showing any significant reduced losses.

Labour and Lib Dems back latest conflict with Brussels

Britain rejects EU call for 40 per cent cut in fishing fleet

By MICHAEL HORNSBY AND PHILIP WEBSTER

BRITAIN yesterday flatly rejected European Union proposals to slash the national fishing fleet.

Ministers will not comply with proposed 40 per cent cuts in the fleet unless Europe acts to stop foreign-owned flag-of-convenience trawlers catching fish in British waters. Emma Bonino, the EU Fisheries Commissioner, infuriated them on Wednesday with the timing of her call. Tony Blair, the Fisheries Minister, yesterday described the proposal for the reduction as "clearly untenable".

He said Britain's case on quota-hopping, under which Spanish fishermen are buying UK-registered boats to fish the UK's quota, was "unarguable". "The Community has got to face the fact that there will be continuing anger in the UK fishing industry if Spanish-crewed, Spanish-owned, Spanish-registered boats continue to catch fish against our UK national quota."

Elliott Morley, Labour's fisheries spokesman, voiced alarm at the Brussels proposal. Labour wanted the Commission to recognise the problem of quota-hoppers and

adjust the British fleet reduction accordingly.

Robin Teverson, Liberal Democrat MEP for Cornwall and West Plymouth, said the Commission's latest proposal was "a body-blow to the industry. It offers no future to the coastal communities and it doesn't recognise the problem of quota-hoppers."

In another pointed dispute with Brussels, Britain has handed over to the European Commission the scientific report at the heart of the scare over baby milk, at the Commission's request. However, it contains little that was not already known to European scientific experts, it was claimed last night.

A Ministry of Agriculture spokesman said the dossier supplied to Brussels did not contain the brand names or the identity of the companies involved. Nor had such information been requested by the Commission. "What we have sent was essentially what was already in the public domain and published back in March," a spokesman said. "This was backed up with a bit more data and information about the methodology used in

the survey of baby milk. There is no risk to public health."

The report concerned tests which found nine leading brands of baby milk contained phthalates, chemicals that could impair fertility.

Britain is to keep up the pressure to solve its disputes with Europe diplomatically. Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, is to tour European capitals next week in an attempt to reach an early agreement on a programme for lifting the ban on British beef exports. He and other ministers, including Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, are to argue for speedy action in the hope that the issue can be resolved before the Florence European summit next month, which John Major has threatened to disrupt.

They were boosted in their efforts by the news yesterday that South Africa wants to resume the trade in British beef and by a report from the world's leading veterinary body, the Paris-based World Organisation for Animal Health, backing Britain's case that there is no reason to ban exports of British cattle or beef provided current safeguards are properly enforced, after the scare over a possible risk to humans from "mad cow" disease.

Mr Hogg is due to meet his EU counterparts in Brussels next Monday and Tuesday to review the ban and to seek an immediate exemption for beef by-products such as gelatin, tallow and semen.

Cattle farmers are to be allowed to graze their older animals temporarily on "set-aside" land from next week to ease the financial pressure caused by the beef crisis. Under European Union rules, land set aside, at £18 an acre, must not be used for growing crops or grazing cattle.

Peter Riddell, page 11



Alison Williams: disease left her bed-ridden and blind

CJD killed woman who lived for sport

A WOMAN has died after contracting the human equivalent of BSE, an inquest in Wales has been told.

Alison Williams, 30, a keen sportswoman, died in February from pneumonia, to which she is thought to have succumbed because she was already suffering from the fatal brain condition, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Most victims of CJD die in their sixties, but in recent years a number of much younger people have developed the disease.

It was the disclosure by the Government on March 20 of a possible link between BSE and a new strain of CJD in ten people under 42, some of them teenagers, which triggered the current beef crisis.

There is no evidence yet that Miss Williams was suffering from this new form of CJD. James Ironside, a leading expert on the disease, told the inquest in Bangor: "There is still no evidence that humans

can develop CJD by being exposed to the BSE agent."

Miss Williams's father, John, 67, described how the illness took hold of his previously active daughter. "Alison was an outdoor girl who loved skiing, walking and sailing. She used to race up the mountains before any of the other rambles and was very healthy. But when she began suffering from the disease she could not walk straight. She lost her memory and was blind before she died."

Independent scientists have issued a warning that it could take up to eight years to establish for certain whether BSE can be transferred to humans. Charles Weissman, a Swiss scientist, who has been asked by the European Commission to lead an independent investigation into the relationship between BSE and CJD, has ruled out any prospect of an early resolution to the central question.

Labour must find cuts says Brown

By PHILIP WEBSTER

GORDON BROWN has asked members of the Shadow Cabinet to cut departmental budgets to fund their preferred spending projects.

In a further illustration of his determination to hold spending ambitions in check, the Shadow Chancellor has given them a month to come up with fresh proposals for savings in their own spending areas.

The decision means that, as the Treasury carries out its annual review of spending that Tory MPs hope will enable Kenneth Clarke to come up with pre-election tax cuts, the Labour leadership is mounting a similar exercise designed to show how it would pay for any new plans.

Some of Mr Brown's allies have dubbed him the "hairshirt Chancellor" because, they say, he is already behaving as if he was in government. The overall message is that new spending commitments can be made only if they are funded from within.

The move has been revealed by a letter to all members of the Shadow Cabinet from Andrew Smith, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury and Mr Brown's number two. The letter, obtained by *The Times*, shows that Mr Brown has been completely undeterred by the internal party row over his plan to scrap child benefit for older children and replace it with a system of educational maintenance grants to help the children in poorer families.

Mr Smith's letter was sent out after a Shadow Cabinet meeting last week, at which cautious optimism was voiced about the party's success so far in fending off Tory attempts to relaunch tax-and-spend attacks on Labour. Mr Smith writes that "public trust depends on our demonstrating clearly that our priorities are different from the Tories and offer real hope for the future, which means showing where we will make savings in order to enable high priority expenditure."

He says that the instances where this has been done have helped to win spending arguments. He cites as an example Labour's education plan to phase out the assisted places scheme to pay for maximum class sizes of 30 for all five, six and seven year olds.

He adds: "We need to be able to deploy more such proposals. We cannot accept that after 17 years in government, the Tories have managed somehow to get priorities exactly right in each departmental budget. That means we must be able to show where we would make savings in order to pay for our priorities in each department."

Rain and cold keep Ulster voters at home

Voting got off to a slow start in the Northern Ireland election yesterday as rain and winter temperatures kept voters at home (Nicholas Watt writes). Armed police had little company for most of the morning as they stood guard at the 584 polling stations throughout the province. By mid-afternoon, however, voting picked up as nationalists and Unionists came out to elect the politicians who will chart the future of Northern Ireland. There were 23 parties in the election, including ten Unionist parties.

Voters will elect 110 members to a forum. Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, will invite party leaders who win seats to nominate negotiators to join the all-party talks that will begin on June 10. Counting starts this morning and the results will be known by afternoon.

Teachers' dilemma

Teachers are increasingly concerned that a Labour government would be indistinguishable from the present administration, a head teachers' leader claimed yesterday as David Blunkett, Shadow Education Secretary, outlined his "back to basics" crusade. David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "The profession sees no difference between the main parties."

Beckett birthplace sold

The birthplace in Dublin of the playwright Samuel Beckett was sold at auction yesterday for £576,000. The identity of the buyer was not revealed. Beckett was born in the house, Coolrinish, in Foxrock, in 1906. The four-bedroom house, set in an acre of grounds, is regarded as being of architectural, as well as historical, interest. The gardens include a tennis court and swimming pool.

Longer drinking hours

Pubs and clubs will be allowed to stay open for an extra hour on Fridays and Saturdays under government proposals published yesterday. Public houses would be allowed to serve alcohol until midnight and registered clubs and discos would be able to serve drinks until 3am. Residents' associations in London are to meet tonight to protest that the move would cause increased nuisance.

Envoy unlawfully killed

A British diplomat died from a blood clot four months after being shot by hijackers who tried to steal his Land Rover. "Discovery" in Nairobi, Kenya, an inquest at Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, was told. The North Buckinghamshire coroner, Rodney Corner, recorded a verdict of unlawful killing on Graeme Gibson, 43, a father-of-two from Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

Emmerdale again

ITV is stepping up its ratings war against the BBC by commissioning a third weekly episode of the rural soap opera *Emmerdale*. The extra edition, which will complement the current Tuesday and Thursday episodes of the programme, is expected to be broadcast from early 1997. *Emmerdale*, which has a regular audience of around 12 million, is one of ITV's most popular shows.

Clark summoned

Alan Clark, a former junior Defence minister and Tory MP, has been summoned by Scotland Yard for allegedly obstructing a policeman after a bomb scare. Mr Clark, 64, is said to have driven his Land Rover through a security cordon in Piccadilly, London, in February. He is due to appear before Bow Street magistrates on June 13. The maximum penalty is a £1,000 fine or a month in jail.

Travel book wins prize

Melanie McGrath has won the £5,000 Mail on Sunday/John Llewellyn Rhys Prize for her book *Motel Nirvana*, the story of a 13,000-mile journey through the southwestern desert states of America (HarperCollins, £16.99). The prize has been presented annually since 1942 for a work of fiction, poetry, drama or non-fiction by a British or Commonwealth writer under the age of 35.

Major takes surprise holiday in Brittany

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN MAJOR has surprised his friends and colleagues by leaving Downing Street for an unexpected holiday in France.

Mr and Mrs Major left London at the beginning of the week for a few days in Brittany. Only the couple's closest friends and associates were told in advance and Downing Street de-

clined to disclose any details of the trip or to say when they would return.

When the Prime Minister left there was no inkling that the European Union was about to launch such a fierce counter-strike against Britain's blocking tactics in the beef war. Mr Major has been kept in regular telephone contact.

Hurd scoffs at Tory attacks on Brussels laws

By PHILIP WEBSTER

DOUGLAS HURD last night contradicted Michael Howard and other Euro-sceptic ministers who are pushing for European law to be made subordinate to national law.

The former Foreign Secretary, a strong pro-European, defended the powers given to the European Commission and European Court of Justice as essential if the European Union was to achieve a full single market. Addressing bankers in Dublin, he dismissed the claims of Euro-sceptics that the commitment in the Maastricht

treaty to "ever-closer union" would lead ultimately to a federal superstate.

Mr Howard, the Home Secretary, recently raised the Euro-sceptic standard with a blistering attack on the Court of Justice and a demand for Britain to start clawing back power from Brussels. Mr Hurd gave a warning that Euro-sceptics who wanted to reassert the supremacy of national law in all areas covered by the treaties would not only be tearing up Maastricht but the Treaty of Rome.

"They would also say goodbye to the single market. The supra-national powers given to the commission and

the European Court are essential if we are to achieve a full single market," he said.

"There is no argument for extending these powers into other fields where governments can operate effectively on their own. But in the field of the single market, the commission and the court are allies of those who want the playing field to be level. We should help them to move further and faster."

While he rejected the argument that a single currency was needed if the single market was to work, he also denied the claims of those who fear the EU is moving inexorably towards a

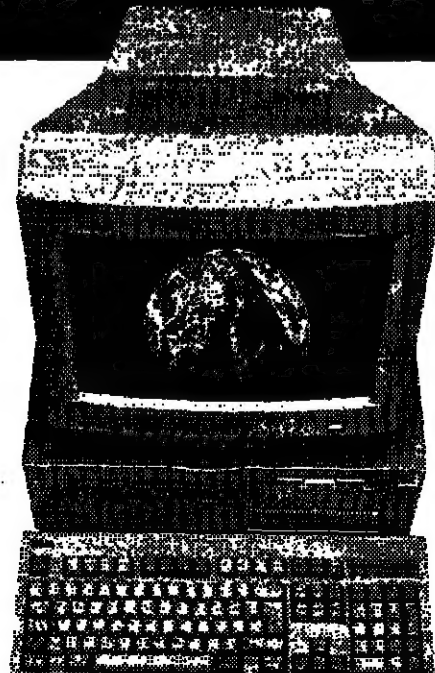
federal superstate. "Some people in my country shy away from the phrase in the treaty about 'ever-closer union', which they fear as presaging a superstate. But the treaty is specifically referring to an ever-closer union of peoples," he said. "That is what the single market is about. It still has a long way to go and we should help it vigorously on its way."

Mr Hurd's words of support contrasted with those of the leading Euro-sceptic James Cran, who told John Major yesterday that he "must not blink" in the face of pressure from Brussels.

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'For me it was fair, I took a life. Never advocate violence, any form of violence'

Thornton walks free amid calls for legal reform

By TIM JONES AND RICHARD FORD

SARA THORNTON, walking free from court yesterday after being convicted of manslaughter for stabbing to death her drunken husband, said she had been fairly punished.

She left court surrounded by well-wishers after a jury cleared her of murdering her husband Malcolm. The verdict brought to an end a five-year struggle in which she became an icon for feminist groups campaigning on behalf of battered wives.

The jury of eight men and four women deliberated for just over six hours before substituting a verdict of manslaughter for Thornton's original murder conviction.

Passing sentence, Mr Justice Scott Baker said: "I sentence you on the basis that killing your husband was diminished by the abnormality of your mind. Were I to sentence you to manslaughter for provocation the sentence would be the same. I take into account the difficulties of living with an alcoholic but you nevertheless took a life."

The judge said he considered her not to be a danger to the public. Thornton was able to walk out of court because she had already served 5½ years when a jury at her first trial at Birmingham Crown Court decided she had murdered her 42-year-old husband as he lay in a drunken stupor on a couch in the family home at Atherstone, Warwickshire.

The verdict brought demands for the Government to abolish the mandatory life sentence for murder to allow judges to fit the punishment to the facts of each crime.

At a press conference just hours after the jury returned its unanimous verdict, Thornton, 41, said she thought that the verdict and sentence were a fair punishment for her crime. "For me it was fair. I took a life." She emphasised her abhorrence of violence: "No, never advocate violence, any form of violence. Violence is not power, violence is powerlessness."

Mr Thornton's family also expressed satisfaction at the verdict. Jean Murray, the dead man's sister, said: "What is important is that he has been shown not to be the terrible person she tried to make him out to be. It has cleared Malcolm's name because she has not proved she was a battered wife."

Gladys Suthers, also Mr Thornton's sister, said: "We think the jury bowed to feminist pressure. No one could stand up to that. We are not happy with the verdict but it is the next best thing to murder."

Thornton said yesterday of the man she killed: "You need to see the person you loved and killed in a good light. Malcolm had a tremendous sense of humour and he was very kind. He was very funny about his alcoholism. He was honest about his drinking and about himself."

She said the money spent prosecuting her would have been better used helping her husband to overcome his chronic drink problem. "When he was alive and lying down drunk in alleyways where was everybody, when he was running around trying to kill me?" she said.

After her press conference in the Randolph Hotel in Oxford, Thornton played tunes on a grand piano in the ballroom, including the theme from *Love Story*.

During Thornton's second trial, the jury at Oxford Crown Court was given harrowing accounts of her husband's violence, brought about by his heavy drinking. The prosecution had argued that his wife was a pathological liar and attention-seeker who killed her husband for ten months for the financial gain of securing her share of the house.

From her prison cell after she was jailed, Thornton contacted the Justice for Women Group, which began a campaign which resulted in the Court of Appeal last December ordering a retrial.

Her release has prompted calls from lawyers for Parliament to intervene to change the law on murder in cases where battered women kill. Yesterday Gareth Peirce, Thornton's solicitor, said: "This case makes it clear that the law needs simplifying. For a jury to have to resolve the many difficult stages involved with these charges is something not even a PhD law student would feel comfortable with."

The retiring Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gosforth, and his predecessor, Lord Lane, have both urged reform of the mandatory life sentence.

Anne Rafferty, chairman of the Criminal Bar Association, said last night: "It is time the mandatory life sentence died a death. It is ridiculous in this day and age and is resulting in trial after trial hearing contorted and sometimes distorted medical evidence to avoid the mandatory sentence being given."

Thornton plans to write a book based on her experience in prison, which she believes should be a place of healing and not of punishment.



Sara Thornton with her daughter Louise, 17. Just before the jury announced their verdict she stood up and mouthed "I love you" to her

Campaigners press Howard to review 70 cases

By RICHARD FORD

MICHAEL HOWARD was urged last night to review the cases of 70 women serving prison sentences for killing their male partners.

Julie Bindel, of Justice for Women, said: "We now demand that all 70 cases of women serving a prison sentence for killing violent partners are reviewed by Michael Howard immediately."

The organisation, which led the campaign for Sara Thornton's retrial, hopes to make the case of Josephine Smith, 34, another cause célèbre. Smith claims that her husband, whom she killed in 1992 while he slept, was violent and made her re-enact scenes from pornographic films. She lost her application for leave to appeal in 1994.

Smith, who had been married for 12 years and has three children, shot her husband at their home at Watlington, Norfolk. Her plea of guilty to manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility was rejected and the judge recommended that she serve a minimum of 12 years for murder. It emerged during her trial that she had secured a mortgage by fraud, and it was said she lied about the abuse she had suffered.

Justice for Women also helped in the cases of Kiranjit Ahluwalia and Emma Humphries. Ms Ahluwalia had been jailed for life for murdering her husband who, the jury was told, mistreated her for ten years. In a retrial in 1992, ordered after medical evidence suggested she might have

been suffering from diminished responsibility because of depression, her plea of manslaughter was accepted and she was sentenced to a term she had already served.

Ms Humphries a former prostitute, was sentenced to be detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure in 1985 for murdering her lover, a former client. She had feared he was about to attack her. She won her appeal last June after the it was ruled that the jury had been misdirected on the question of provocation.

Child died in dentist's chair

By BILL FROST

A DOCTOR who gave anaesthetic to a schoolgirl who died in a dentist's chair told an inquest yesterday that one of his machines was broken during the operation.

The heart of Katie Dougal, 9, of Breaston, Derbyshire, "gave up" while she was undergoing what should have been straightforward surgery on two cracked teeth at the Alexander Gordon clinic in Long Eaton, Derbyshire, on January 18.

Dr Tatas Kumar Basoo, the anaesthetist, told a hearing in Derby that a lead from a machine known as a capnograph, used to monitor harmful levels of carbon dioxide during treatment, had broken. He had decided to continue Katie's treatment, relying on experience to regulate the gas level in her lungs.

Dr Basoo admitted he was unaware of manufacturer's guidelines which stated that capnographs are the only accepted method of monitoring CO2 and "must be used in every case".

He was asked if he had read the 1994 Association of Anaesthetists booklet of stan-

dards of treatment and monitoring, which described the capnograph as equally necessary. Dr Basoo told Peter Ashworth, the coroner: "I have a copy of the 1988 guidelines but not that one."

He said that problems began ten minutes into Katie's operation, when her blood pressure started to drop. An injection of atrophine was administered to restore normal pressure but succeeded only temporarily.

"A release after atrophine is very uncommon - I've never seen it before. I turned all the anaesthetic gases off and told the dentist to stop the operation," he told the inquest.

"Her pulse rate was flat and we went into a cardiac situation. There was no heart output so I administered oxygen and was squeezing the ventilator bag. She was showing signs of recovery when the paramedic arrived. She was breathing on her own but not adequately and the heart was still not working."

Dr Basoo added: "It's the first time anything like this has happened to me. Ninety nine times out of 100 the



Katie Dougal: cracked teeth were being treated

atrophine will work, as it did at first with Katie. I'm at a loss to say exactly what caused the cardiac arrest."

He denied that he had caused a build-up of carbon dioxide by supplying too little oxygen to Katie but admitted a capnograph would have kept a constant watch on the levels. There was no question that the tube was correctly inserted, he said. "I had already done 12 or 13 other operations without a capnograph that day."

Mr Ashworth said that tests had revealed no underlying condition which could have brought about the collapse. The hearing continues.

Coach suspended after accusation

By CAROL MIDGLEY

ANOTHER leading British swimming coach has been suspended after being questioned by child-protection officers over an allegation made by a female pupil.

Eric Henderson, 48, a former Commonwealth gold medalist, has been reported by a young woman who swims for the City of Bristol squad. He was immediately suspended by the Amateur Swimming Association and its chief executive, David Sparkes, said it would be co-operating fully with the police.

Bristol City Council, which has employed Mr Henderson as a swimming coach for 12 years, also suspended him, on full pay.

A spokesman for Avon and Somerset Police confirmed that officers from the Family and Child Protection Unit at Bristol were investigating an alleged incident after a coaching session.

The investigation comes two weeks after the British Olympic diving coach, Mike Edge, was suspended over similar allegations, thought to date back ten years. Mr Edge and Lindsey Fraser, a former national diving coach, were arrested by police at Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, and are bailed to appear there in a few weeks' time.

A year ago, Paul Hickson, the former Olympic swimming coach, was jailed for 17 years for raping or assaulting 11 girls in his charge.

Mr Henderson, a divorced father of three who recently applied for the job of director of English swimming, said yesterday: "I feel shocked and let down. I don't know what the allegation is, but I am certainly very much innocent."

Mr Henderson has worked as Bristol City Council's sports development officer for swimming since 1984. A former butterfly international, he teaches pupils aged 12 to 28 for the City of Bristol Swimming Club and regularly runs his own morning coaching sessions at local pools.

Mr Sparkes said: "In accordance with the ASA's own strict guidelines, Eric Henderson has been suspended from membership until the issue has been resolved."

An official at the ASA added:



Henderson: supported by many parents

ed: "It would be wrong to say that these recent spate of incidents are not damaging the sport - we want parents to feel this is a safe sport in all respects - but we must remember they are only allegations."

Many parents of children coached by Mr Henderson defended him yesterday. Jane Leslie, of Pilning, Bristol, whose daughter Charlotte, 17, swims for Henderson's team, said: "This has come out of the blue. Everyone at the club is behind him. The feeling is that Eric cannot be guilty. There has never been a murmur about him."

Schoolgirl's killer jailed for 30 years

By A STAFF REPORTER

A DOUBLE rapist who murdered a 16-year-old schoolgirl as she walked home from a pantomime was jailed for 30 years yesterday.

Gavin McGuire, 37, had denied abducting, sexually assaulting and strangling Mhairi Julian in December.

The jury of nine women and six men took less than half an hour to find him guilty. Friends of Mhairi went with joy and applauded as the unanimous guilty verdict was read out.

Mhairi had gone with friends to see *Sleeping Beauty* at the Palace Theatre in Kilmarlock, Strathclyde. At 9.15pm she set off alone to walk half a mile to her home.

Within yards of the front door McGuire struck, punching her repeatedly before dragging her into a bus depot. Her battered and naked body was found by police next day. She had been gagged with her bra and strangled with her blouse.

The High Court in Glasgow was told that McGuire, of Stevenston, Strathclyde, had been convicted in 1977 of rape and, in August 1986, of at-

tempted rape, for which he received a ten-year sentence. He was released in July 1993.

Yesterday the judge, Lord Clyde, told him: "You have been found guilty of a callous and brutal murder of a young helpless girl and an act of atrocity."

"The number and nature of the acts of violence you have perpetrated only make the case particularly appalling. Your evident lack of humanity and self-control makes you a danger to the public."

He said that McGuire should not be released from prison except on humanitarian grounds and ordered him to serve a minimum of 30 years.

Gordon Jackson, QC, for the defence, offered no excuse on McGuire's behalf. He said outside the courtroom that his client had not even thought about appealing.

Painstaking work by forensic scientists found fibres on the dead girl's naked back which were "indistinguishable" from samples taken from a lumberjack-style shirt belonging to McGuire, who lived with his mother.

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'It was a scene of unimaginable carnage, one's worst nightmare. The air was thick with bluish smoke'

Head teacher calls for handguns to be banned

REPORTS BY STEPHEN FARRELL AND GILLIAN BOWDITCH

THE head teacher of Dunblane Primary School made an emotional plea for handguns to be banned yesterday, after telling the inquiry into the massacre how he had walked into the gym as acrid gunsmoke hung in the air.

"Prior to our tragedy in March, I really had no view about guns whatsoever — I didn't know anything about them," Ronald Taylor said. "But now I cannot for the life of me understand why anybody would wish to keep handguns at all. If people wish to continue with sporting activities, surely to goodness disabled guns could be kept elsewhere."

"I can only imagine that such people have never seen the result of what guns can do. I have."

Mr Taylor, 46, was on the

telephone in his office when the shootings happened. He heard indistinct bangs in the distance but thought it was builders at work. Then the assistant head teacher, Agnes Watson, 47, burst into his office, crouching down and told him: "There is a man in the school with a gun."

He hung up and dialled 999, then ran to the gymnasium. On the way he met a student teacher, David Scott, who said the gunman had shot himself. Mr Taylor said: "I burst into the gym. It was a scene of unimaginable carnage, one's worst nightmare. The air seemed to be thick with bluish smoke and the smell of cordite was quite strong."

A group of injured children were crying in one corner. Leaving Mr Scott to look after them, Mr Taylor left the gym

to tell staff to call an ambulance, then went back inside with the janitor, John Currie.

"It was at that point I noticed Mr Hamilton at the top of the gym. He seemed to be moving. John Currie was further down the gym than I was. I noticed there was a gun lying on the floor beside Mr Hamilton and I asked Mr Currie to kick the gun away. We noticed that Mr Hamilton had a gun in his hand. Mr Currie moved the gun and threw it away to his left."

His voice broke as he told how he tried to help the injured children. Police arrived with other staff, who began to comfort the youngsters and two injured staff lying in a corner.

"We just did what we could. The staff were quite magnificent." He was then told by

police that the next priority was to identify the dead, which was carried out amid "considerable chaos and confusion". The process was hampered by the death of Gwenie Maylor, the class teacher, and the fact that the register had not been completed that morning. Nursery staff who taught the children the year before were brought in to help, and he recognised some victims himself. "We had to take staff in and out of the gym on several occasions. It was very traumatic," he said.

One record card was missing and one child was wearing someone else's clothing, which added to the problems. He has since ordered that individual photographs should be included within children's records, but said pictures would have been of limited use at the time.

After giving evidence, Mr Taylor called for support for the Dunblane Snowdrop Petition, started by eight parents of children living locally, calling for the private ownership of handguns to be outlawed. The organisers now have 62,000 signatures — more than the number of licences for handguns in the UK. They aim to collect more than 200,000 signatures, equivalent to the total number of handguns legally permitted on firearms certificates.

Speaking of the opening days of the inquiry, Mr Taylor



Head teacher Ronald Taylor, left, said he saw Hamilton's body slumped in the gym, a gun still in his hand. The killer's mother, Agnes Watt, right, was puzzled when her son did not make his daily phone call to her



Hamilton fired again point-blank as wounded children lay on floor

THOMAS HAMILTON had stood over some of his wounded young victims as they lay on the gymnasium floor and shot them at point-blank range.

Detective Chief Superintendent John Ogg, the senior investigating officer, said that the gunman's actions had been reconstructed from

ballistics and from other evidence.

He agreed with Ian Bonomy, QC, for the Crown, who had said: "I want to ask you about certain conclusions you have drawn about the way Thomas Hamilton behaved in the gym."

"I think you have yourself drawn the conclusion that in

the gymnasium there was a group of children who either had been disabled by the firing of the gun, or who themselves had been thrown to the floor, over whom Hamilton stood and fired his gun from a distance which must have been simply the height of his hand above the children."

said: "As you can imagine, it has been a harrowing two days for us. If it has been harrowing for us, you can imagine how difficult it has been for the families, so my heart goes out to them."

He praised the bravery of the wounded staff, Mary Blake and Eileen Harriell, and the others who had acted "magnificently" in helping in-

jured children in the gymnasium and others around the school.

"I am extremely proud of them all. The wounds in our community in Dunblane suffered as a result of Hamilton will never leave us, but with the support and understanding and love they will heal and fade with time."

Mr Taylor told the inquiry

that new security measures had been installed. There are now 45 phone lines, one in each classroom and outbuilding, and senior staff carry mobile phones. Dunblane's community policeman PC Henry Stark sits immediately inside the front door, where all visitors are issued badges and must sign in and out.

A closed-circuit camera sys-

tem covers the buildings and grounds, with pictures beamed directly to the janitor's office and Stirling Police headquarters. All emergency doors are linked to a buzzer system and a review is under way to install single entry access. All staff and parent helpers at the school have their backgrounds checked for criminal records.

Killer's mother tells of chat before massacre

THOMAS HAMILTON was a model son, his mother told the inquiry. He visited her twice a week, telephoned every night and occasionally gave her money. She heard of the massacre when, having missed his daily call, she rang his home and the police answered.

Agnes Watt, 64, a small, dark-haired woman wearing a white embroidered cardigan, said the night before the massacre her son had visited her, taken a bath, eaten a meal and had a "blether". She had not noticed anything unusual.

Mrs Watt said Hamilton's income came from buying and selling cameras. When he made a good deal he used to give her £50.

When he carried out the shootings, Hamilton was in severe financial difficulties with debts of more than £11,000. The boys' clubs he ran had amassed an additional deficit of £15,907.

He had reached the credit limit of £1,500 on his Barclaycard five days earlier. His loan company had turned him down for a fourth loan. Detective Chief Inspector Paul Hughes of Central Scotland Police said Hamilton had a series of bank accounts that he juggled, refinancing them when they became unmanageable. He owed the Bank of Scotland £3,511; he owed Barclays £1,500; the debt on his Debenhams card was £737.14; he had three other loans totalling £5,350. His bank balance was 3p. In addition, Hamilton was behind on his council tax and the local authority had started legal action against him. Mr



Hamilton: had debts of more than £11,000

Hughes said Hamilton used credit cards to buy firearms by mail order.

Hamilton, 43, was born in Glasgow in 1952 to Agnes and Thomas Watt, a bus driver. Shortly after his birth, his parents separated and Mrs Watt returned to live with her adoptive parents, Catherine and James Hamilton, taking her baby son with her. As part of the divorce arrangements, Mr and Mrs Hamilton adopted the baby and brought him up as their own. It was not until he was a teenager that he found out that Agnes Watt was his natural mother. Even after that, Hamilton treated her as a sister.

When he was aged about nine, the family moved from Glasgow to Stirling. The inquiry was told that although Hamilton and his mother were close, he played a cruel trick on her. Sheila Sutherland, a close friend of Mrs Watt, said Hamilton had a "malicious schoolboy sense of

humour". Four years ago his mother had developed diabetes and Hamilton had got a friend to telephone her, telling her that she would have to go to hospital in Inverness, 100 miles away. Mrs Sutherland said: "The call had greatly distressed Mrs Watt." She said the incident had blown over and Mrs Watt and her son had remained close.

Mrs Watt said she knew of only one friend of Hamilton's, a Jim Gillespie, who visited him from time to time. She said she was unaware of any debts her son had but said she had given him £20 on two occasions when he was short of money.

The Lord Advocate, Lord Mackay of Drumadoon, asked Mrs Watt if she had noticed anything different about her son in the last few weeks of his life. Mrs Watt replied: "No." She said he had made no complaint to her about the local authority.

Mrs Watt met Hamilton in town on the Monday before the killings. He told her he was going to Stirling University but he did not say why. The next day he visited her at home around 2pm and left at 6pm. "He took a bath, had something to eat and we sat and blethered," she said. The conversation was about Mrs Watt's father, James Hamilton. It was a perfectly normal conversation, she said.

A statement was read to the court from James Hamilton, 87, Hamilton's grandfather and adoptive father. In it he said Hamilton never smoked or drank, had no girlfriends and never lost his temper. "He never raised his hand to me or showed me any violence."

Parents had to wait three hours for information

PARENTS started flocking to the school soon after the shootings as news filtered through the village. "They knew that something terrible had happened but they didn't know what," Laura Dunlop, advocate for the families of the victims, said.

The parents of children in Gwen Maylor's class, some carrying younger brothers and sisters, were told that this was the class affected. Miss Dunlop said that the surviving children wanted their parents and the priorities of the parents was to be with their children. But there was a delay of more than three hours before some of the parents of the injured were informed.

Andrew Gibb, solicitor for the Maylor family, told the inquiry that Mrs Maylor's husband, Rodney, was ushered into the school library alone at 1pm. Not knowing that his wife was dead. After half an hour he threatened to go to the media to find out what had happened. It was only then that he was told.

Mr Maylor then spent a frantic hour trying to contact

his daughter, Esther, who, unbeknown to him, had arrived at the school at about 12.30pm and had been ushered into the staff room, only yards from her father. It was not until 2.45pm that Esther and her father met.

Under cross-examination, Detective Chief Superintendent John Ogg said his information was that a senior officer had briefed Mr Maylor as soon as he arrived at the school, but he admitted that his information could be wrong and said lessons would be learnt from the incident.

Mr Ogg said the situation at the school had been unbelievable. "For the first hour it was chaotic, with injured children being removed and treated at the locus." He saw police officers crying at the scene.

He said that, with hindsight, a list of the injured children should have been taken before they left the school. He admitted that even the most seriously injured children had been able to identify themselves to doctors. Superintendent Joseph Holden, in charge of looking

after the families, was criticised by lawyers for the behaviour for allowing the media to gather around the house where relatives were being kept immediately after the massacre. Asked why he had not told the relatives earlier in the day who was dead and who injured, he said that information was not forthcoming from the hospital and the identification of bodies in the gym was "shaky".

At 11.15am, less than two hours after the killings, he told the parents that he did not know how many were dead, only to be told by one of the fathers that radio bulletins were announcing 12 deaths.

"I was shocked. The information could have been correct. I didn't want to deny it. I didn't know that information," he said. He agreed that information must have been given to the media before relatives. "I felt quite keenly that I was the person who was responsible for giving information to those parents and, obviously, early in that morning an announcement like that affected my credibility with parents."

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Marquess of Bristol sells off titles for a place in the sun

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Marquess of Bristol raised a much-needed £52,000 yesterday when he sold off ancient titles that have been in his family for generations. He plans to leave the family seat at Ickworth in Suffolk and build a beach home and a new life in the Bahamas.

Lords of the manor are the basest coinage of the British aristocracy, but still have a wide-ranging appeal. The buyers of the marquess's eight lordships sold at a London auction yesterday will gain no entry in *Debrett*, neither land nor house, and certainly no *droit de seigneur* over the brides of the parish.

Michael Whatley, a solicitor, paid £7,300 for the lordship of the manor of Doveton Hall, near Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk, because that is where he now lives. The title dates back to 1292, but carries no particular rights or privileges. "It's just a bit of fun if it is your own home that the title relates to," an agent acting for Mr Whatley said. Mr Whatley



The marquess: new life

narrowly outbid Nick Doveton, 20, a photographer bidding for his mother, whose ancestors were lords of the manor of Doveton in the 14th century. "We are researching the life of Robert de Doveton, and the lordship might have given us a lot more information about him," a disappointed Mr Doveton said.

Mr Whatley will be entitled to put his title on letterheads and anywhere else he chooses. He may call himself Michael Whatley, Lord of the Manor of

Doveton, or Michael Whatley, Lord of Doveton. He may not call himself Lord Whatley of Doveton, or Lord Doveton. Another of Lord Bristol's lordships was bought for £4,200 by Jean Evans, who farms land in Suffolk to which the title relates. "I have no idea if it gives me any special rights; it is just nice to keep history together," Mrs Evans said.

The bargain of the day went to David Mullins, 53, who owns a chain of employment agencies in Brighton: he paid £30,500 for the barony of Gorey in Co Wexford. Irish baronies are a different animal from lordships of the manor, although almost equally worthless. Mr Mullins has bought the right to call himself Baron of Gorey but will still not get into *Debrett*.

"My family were all servants to Lord Arundel of Wardour in Wiltshire; my grandfather was his coachman," Mr Mullins said. "After all that service, I wanted a title for myself." Lordships of the manor are among the most ancient titles in England, with



David Mullins, the new Baron of Gorey, with his fiancée Carlotta Hendricks

their roots in Saxon times. The Domesday Book of 1086 lists 13,418 English manors and their owners. William the Conqueror distributed lordships to his Norman barons and supporters, as did Henry VIII after the dissolution of the monasteries.

Lords of the manor were the linchpins of feudal England, offering protection and land to their tenants in return for rent paid in money or labour. But with the agrarian revolution and rising prosperity, the

system was eroded and with it the power of the manorial lord. In 1922, the most revolutionary piece of land legislation this century swept away the last vestiges of feudal tenure, replacing it with modern-style freehold or leasehold. The Law of Property Act took away the lord's jurisdiction over all land except that which he owned himself, and the lord's titles and powers became largely redundant, easily bought and sold as baubles on the open market.

There was little trade in them until the 1980s, when property values soared and the upwardly mobile sought further trappings of snobbery and success to go with the Porsche. Only a few rights, and occasionally a charter, remain with the titles. Some lords still have the right to hold markets and fairs, to mine for minerals and to charge BT for telegraph poles.

Leading article, page 19

Why the wealthy of the world are to the manor drawn

By JOANNA BALE

THE sale of titles is worth £3 million a year, according to Manorial Auctioneers, which claims to handle 90 per cent of them.

Robert Smith, chairman of the Manorial Society of Great Britain, of which Manorial Auctioneers is a trading arm, said: "The average price is £8,000, but it fluctuates. In 1989 it peaked at £11,000. Prices dropped in the early 1990s but are picking up."

"We get Americans buying them, but most go to British buyers, sometimes expatriates. Many people buy them when they purchase a manor house and want the title to go with it. It often appeals to the man who has made good and has bought himself a Rolls-Royce as a status symbol."

When Abdul Latif arrived in Britain in 1969, he could barely speak English. Two years ago the Bangladeshi-born restaurant owner joined the ancient gentry as a lord of the manor after paying £5,500 for the title Lord of Harpole with a domain in Wickham Market, Suffolk. He said: "I

use the title on my menu and on the front of my restaurant. Some people think I am very important and they have good faith in my name."

Joseph Hardy, a Pennsylvania lumber tycoon, outbid a Japanese buyer to pay £85,000 for the lordship of Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire, in 1990. Mr Hardy, one of the richest 200 men in America, with a £240 million fortune, uses the title to market his spa resort in Pittsburgh.

Gerald Rand, a wealthy businessman and retired master builder who owns Lynford Hall, near Thetford, Norfolk, and four local lordships, saves around £20 each year on the bill for heating and lighting his 110-room mansion because he carries poles and pylons on his land. Mr Rand says he regrets the commercialism that now surrounds title buying.

Last year, a Hong Kong solicitor, Ma Ching Nam, paid £330,000 for the 17th-century Mounie Castle near Oldmeldrum, Grampian, and the right to call himself Baron Ma of Mounie.



The Duchess of York with Princess Beatrice. She and Princess Eugenie will stay with their mother

Clerk sets seal on Yorks' divorce

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE marriage of the Duke and Duchess of York was officially ended yesterday with the processing of a non-descript-looking piece of paper.

Ten years after the couple wed on a day which for millions represented a new chapter in the future of the Royal Family, a legal clerk issued a decree that their divorce was now "absolute". After the three years they have lived apart, the most noted immediate public impact on the couple will be that the Duchess will no longer use the title "Her Royal Highness".

A spokesman for the couple said: "Today marks the end of a chapter in their family's life and the start of a new one." The humble but historic document carried a standard fee of £20.

It was a far cry from the cost of the Westminster Abbey wedding although the legal bill for the divorce will be rather higher.

The low-key issue of the decree absolute by the Family Division of the High Court came at the first legal chance: six weeks and one day after the Duke was granted a decree nisi. The Duke applied for the divorce, with the Duchess's consent, on the grounds that they had been legally separated for more than two years.

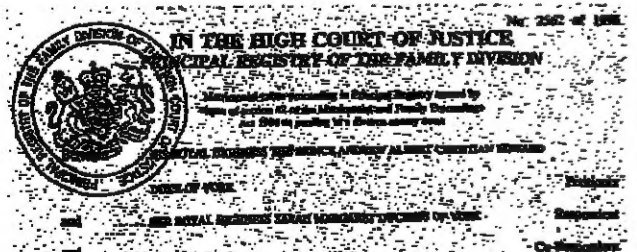
Buckingham Palace would say little yesterday — and

nothing about the financial settlement but it is thought that the Duchess has agreed to a £2 million financial package, under which she gets a relatively modest £500,000 from the Royal Family.

The Palace repeated a statement made three years ago that the children would continue to live with the Duchess and that both parents would participate in their upbringing. A spokesman for the Duke and Duchess said: "It is still true that they remain close friends. They are dedicated parents, committed to raising their daughters together. Their top priority is to ensure the children's wellbeing and happiness along with their own."

Yesterday, as the legal paperwork was processed in a small room on an upper floor corridor at the back of Somerset House in the Strand, the couple were 130 miles apart. The Duke was at work at the Royal Naval Air Station at Portland, Dorset, after a night journey in the Royal Train. He had spent yesterday in York, the dukedom of which the Queen gave him on his marriage to Sarah Ferguson on July 23, 1986.

The Duchess spent the day at home in Wentworth on the Surrey-Berkshire border with their children, Princess Beatrice, seven, and six-year-old Princess Eugenie.



The £20 decree absolute document which ended the Duke and Duchess's marriage after ten years

Writer's Whisky Galore home is put up for sale

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE island home where the comedy classic *Whisky Galore* was written is up for sale.

Compton Mackenzie wrote his best-seller about parched islanders rescuing a Second World War cargo of whisky from the wreck of a ship after the SS *Politician* sank near his house on the Isle of Barra in the Outer Hebrides.

The *Politician* was carrying clothing, luxury goods, mil-

lions of pounds of foreign currency and 22,000 cases of whisky to America when she hit rocks between Barra and Eriskay in 1941. The islanders are believed to have unofficially liberated as many as 5,000 cases of whisky before the authorities intervened.

The present owner, Harold Cousins, is moving back to his native Lake District with his wife Brenda. The Oban estate agents Alexander Dawson are inviting offers above £90,000.



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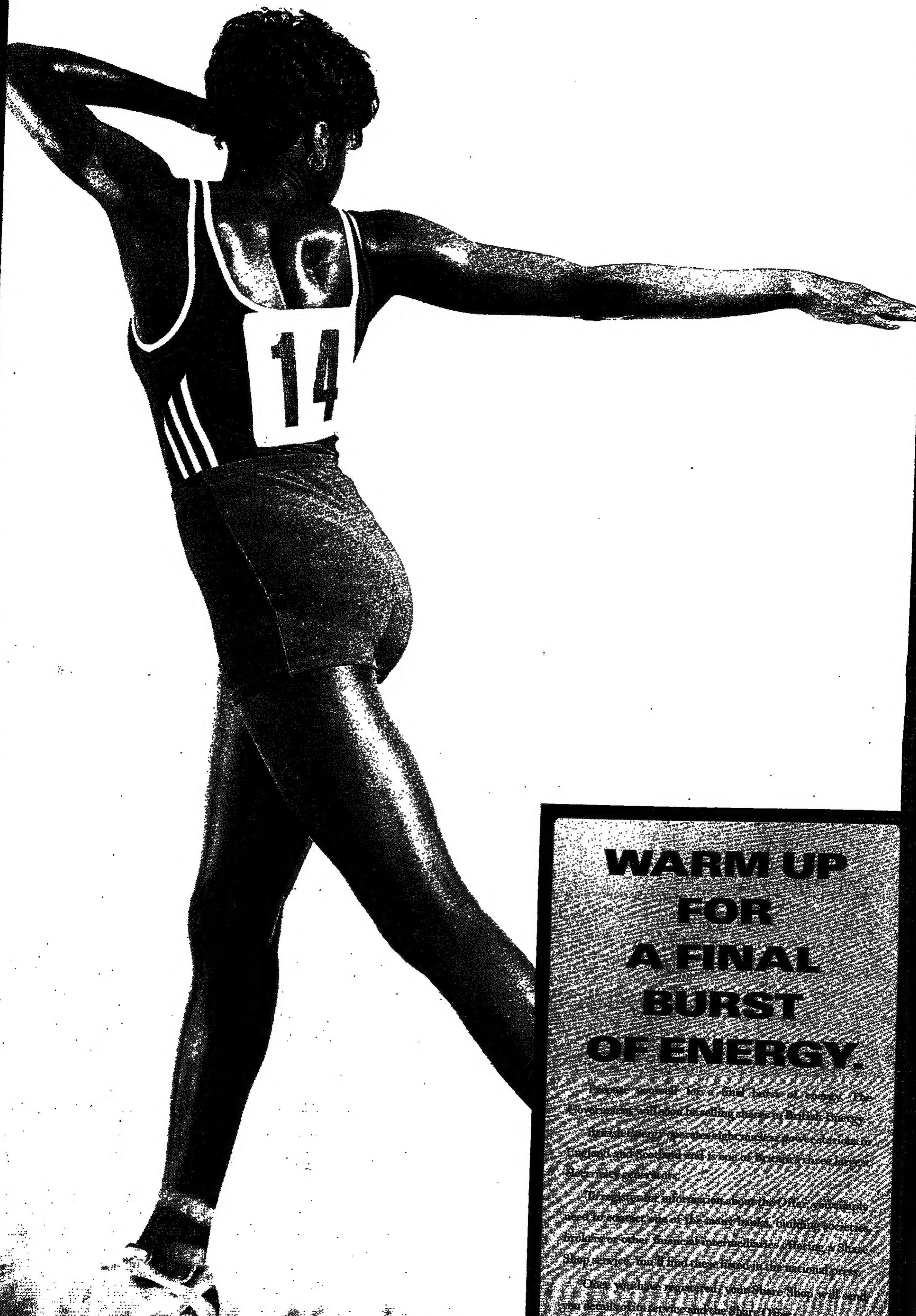
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Passenger shot dead after argument over minor road crash

By ADRIAN LEE

A MAN was shot dead in a London street and his friend injured as they argued with a motorist over who was to blame for a minor traffic accident.

Detectives said they were as yet unsure whether the incident was another example of "road rage". The 35-year-old victim was a passenger in a Mitsubishi Lancer which apparently failed to stop after colliding with a dark sports car at 11pm on Monday, police disclosed yesterday.

The sports car pursued the Mitsubishi at high speed for a mile through north London before there was a dispute over who should pay for the damage. A handgun was produced and one man was shot twice in the head. He died at the roadside. Another passenger, aged 41, was shot in the face at close range, but survived. The 33-year-old driver of the Mitsubishi was threatened, but escaped across wasteland.

The survivors have told

detectives that they did not know their attacker. Witnesses said they saw their red Lancer estate being chased by the sports car, driven by a man who was waving a stick out of a window. The two vehicles, which had collided in Seven Sisters Road at Manor House, north London, stopped in Surrey Gardens, Harringay, where there was a fight.

The dead man was a Ghanaian-born German who was on holiday in Britain. The injured man, who is also Ghanaian but lives in London, was released from hospital after treatment.

The killer was described as white, in his 30s, 5ft 8in tall, well built and with a London accent.

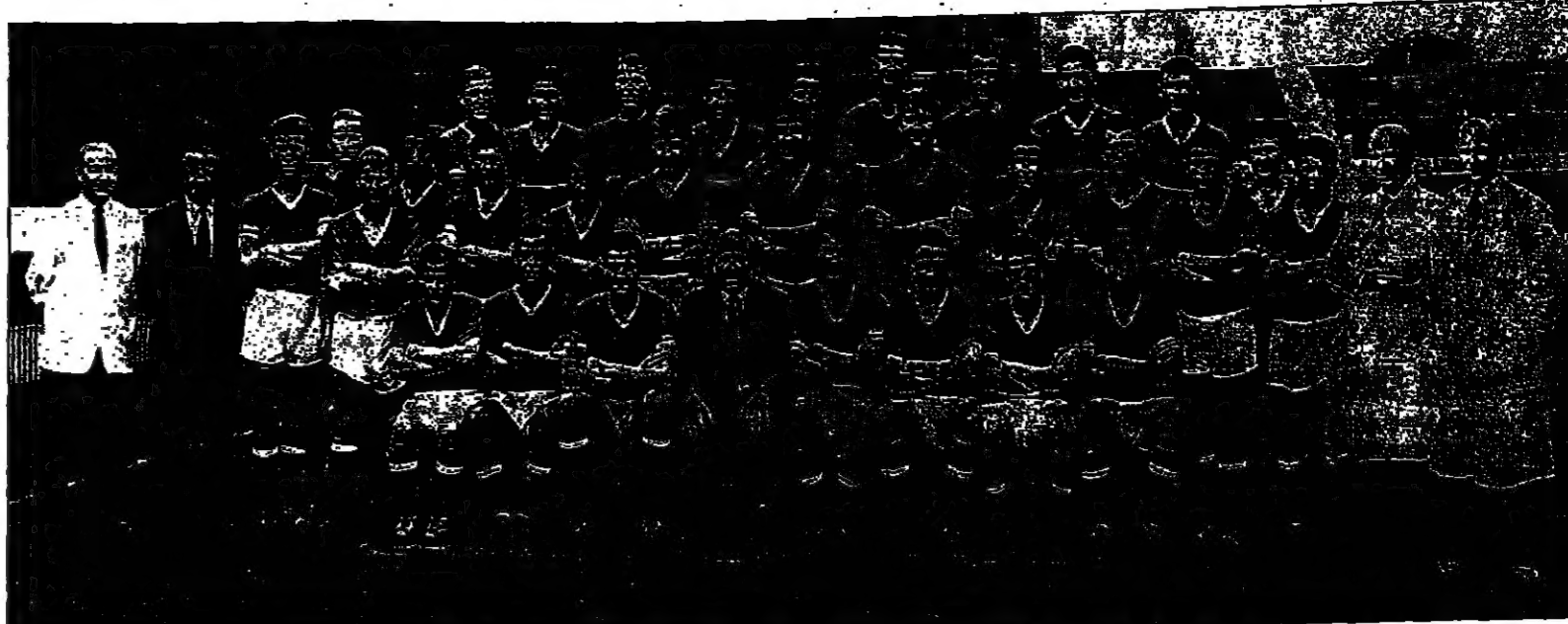
Detective Chief Inspector Glenn Gilbertson, who is leading the inquiry, said: "I personally don't like to use the term road rage because I believe it trivialises what can be a serious matter. There are still a lot of questions to be answered, but at the moment

it appears to be something that followed on from a belligerent incident between drivers."

Detectives said they believed the weapon used was a .22 handgun, which has not been recovered.

Mr Gilbertson said he was anxious to find witnesses. "What I am keen to do is to trace anyone who saw any part of that incident who may be able to give us some lead as to whether that was the root cause of the incident, or whether it perhaps goes back further than that."

Sandy Myles, 47, a market researcher, who lives in the cul-de-sac where the man was shot, heard gunshots. "I looked out the front door and saw a group of men screaming and yelling. There was no street lighting so it was hard to see. I phoned 999 and went to have another look. I heard one gunshot, immediately shut the door, then there were two more." He then called an ambulance.



The Manchester United players and staff of 1959, including Bishop Auckland left-winger Warren Bradley, circled, who went on to play for England.

Blair tackles United over debt to stricken amateurs

By PAUL WILKINSON

TONY BLAIR is calling on Manchester United to repay a debt of honour and save a famous non-league team threatened with extinction. The amateurs of Bishop Auckland, close to the Labour leader's Sedgefield constituency in Co Durham, are facing bankruptcy after agreeing to pay £30,000 damages to a visiting player injured in a tackle.

Mr Blair wrote to the Cup and League winners this week, reminding them that Bishop Auckland helped

them out after the Munich air disaster 38 years ago. Many of United's young stars were killed or injured and Bishops loaned the Manchester club several players to enable it to complete its fixtures.

Mr Blair said: "When the tragic Munich air crash occurred and Manchester were unable to turn out a team to complete their league fixtures, Bishop Auckland came to their rescue. Bob Hardisty captained the reserves and helped bring on the young players, while Warren Bradley played left wing for the first team and within

a few weeks was playing for the full England side.

"Bishop Auckland's generosity at this time should be included in the great sporting stories of all time. It would be very sad to see this club disappear. Bishop Auckland holds a special place in the hearts of most people in the North East."

Bishop Auckland is a founder member of the Football Association and has won a series of honours in its 110-year history. The club, which was not insured, faces closure over damages it must pay by June 6 to George

Shepherd, a Macclesfield Town player, who suffered a broken leg.

Local people have rallied round to raise more than £13,000, to be boosted by a sports day on Sunday. So far, approaches to Manchester United and neighbouring giants Newcastle United have gone unanswered. Steve Newcomb, Bishops' chairman, said he hoped the Labour leader's intervention would produce a result: "It is wonderful to know such a senior politician has time to help."

Football, pages 38, 39 & 44

Murdering Thai monk reprieved

By ANDREW DRUMMOND

THE THAI monk who murdered British backpacker Jo Masheder in the grounds of a Buddhist temple has been spared the death sentence to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the reign of King Bhumibol of Thailand.

But Sandra Gregory, the Briton who was jailed for 25 years for trafficking in 89 grams of heroin earlier this year, had heard nothing by late yesterday about a possible cut in her sentence.

Yodchart Suephoo, 21, who had raped a Thai girl and admitted raping an Austrian tourist before killing Miss Masheder, from Cheshire, early this year, had his death sentence commuted to life imprisonment. It means he is eligible for further pardons.

The announcement was made by Somchai Montirawat, the Deputy Interior Minister, who also announced the reprieve of a former communist insurgent accused of killing a policeman. But Gregory, from Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire, and about 30 other Britons had heard nothing.

A British Embassy spokesman said: "Our understanding is that the pardons announced today were made unofficially in a briefing with local journalists. We are waiting to hear what Britons are on the list."



Ustinov: dual role

A diploma for Poirot

By PAUL WILKINSON

SIR PETER USTINOV is to collect an honorary diploma from a leading forensic science academy on behalf of his screen persona, the Agatha Christie detective Hercule Poirot. He will join 50 police awarded diplomas from a two-year course at the National Training Centre for Scientific Support to Crime Investigation, near Crook, Co Durham.

The qualification, the first of its kind, is accredited by Durham University, where Sir Peter is the Chancellor. Peter Ablett, the centre's director, said: "His portrayal of Poirot and his close links with Durham University make him a natural choice for the honorary award. The course recognises the importance of examinations at the scene of the crime."

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Lake: lost stone

Gulf War victim is 'cured' in America

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A VETERAN of the Gulf War who suffered a life-threatening illness after the conflict says he has been cured by treatment in America. Robert Lake, a former REME corporal, was one of the worst-affected of a growing number of veterans claiming to suffer from Gulf War syndrome.

A year ago he was in a wheelchair and losing weight. After intensive treatment at a clinic in Texas, paid for by the Army Benevolent Fund, he has been able to "throw his wheelchair into the garage".

Mr Lake, 28, whose weight fell from 13 stone to 8 stone, said yesterday: "The treatment has changed my life."

His illness was attributed to the anti-nerve gas injections and tablets he took to counter the feared threat from Iraqi chemical and biological warfare attacks.

Mr Lake, who lives in Yorkshire with his parents, was treated by the American Environmental Health Foundation in Dallas with an antibody developed for veterans suffering from supposed Gulf War syndrome.

Virginia Murray, a consultant in occupational and environmental toxicology at Guy's Hospital, London, said that detoxification was not a "true-time method of treatment" for this type of illness. Other Gulf War veterans would not necessarily benefit from the same treatment.

Children of migrant Irish hit by high death rates

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

CHILDREN of Irish immigrants are suffering far higher mortality rates than the rest of Britain's population, but no one can explain why.

Among men of working age with Irish parents, death rates are 26 per cent higher than for those from British families, a study has revealed. For women the difference is greater, at 29 per cent. The gap is still wider in the 15 to 44 age group — men are 45 per cent more likely to die and women 64 per cent more likely.

The difference persists even when corrected for social class and covers most major causes of death. Cancer was especially common among Irish men of working age and among women over 60.

The figures, published in the *British Medical Journal*, come from a study by Seamus Hardinge of the Office for National Statistics and Professor Rasaratnam Balajirajan of Surrey University. Using the 1971 census, they identified a group of 6,308 people aged 15 or over, born in Britain to parents born in Ireland. Those who had died by 1989 — a total of 1,548 — were identified from the NHS central register and the death rate compared with figures for people of British parentage.

Those born of Irish parents had higher rates of death for most of the major causes, including cancer, heart dis-

ease, respiratory disease in men, injuries and suicides. Only in deaths from stroke did they have a lower death rate.

Ms Hardinge says that a precisely similar sample is not available to compare these figures with death rates in Ireland. An earlier study has shown that first-generation Irish immigrants suffer higher death rates than those they leave behind.

"This is unusual for immigrant groups," Ms Hardinge says. "Usually they are healthier than the people who remain in the country of origin." It has been argued, she says, that the ease of immigration from Ireland to Britain may have encouraged the less healthy to migrate, explaining higher death rates in first-generation immigrants.

The findings clearly show that the second-generation Irish continue to experience adverse mortality risks, particularly at younger ages. The authors say in *BMJ*. In a commentary, John Haskiey, a statistician from the Office of National Statistics suggests that some important elements of "being Irish" persist beyond the initial migration — but it remains unclear what these are. The fact that many people of Irish extraction live in big towns and are over-represented in manual occupations is not enough to explain the figures.



Rachel Howker, 11, who has been released from hospital in Tampa, Florida, after emergency surgery for a heart condition. Rachel, from Manchester, was on a trip to Disney World when she collapsed. She is expected home on Monday

Cervical cancer vaccine 'hopeful'

THE first trials of a vaccine against cervical cancer have shown encouraging results, a British team has reported.

The cancer, one of the commonest among women, is strongly linked to the human papillomavirus (Nigel Hawkes writes). About 90 per cent of the tumours in patients with the gene for HPV, suggesting that infection with the virus contributes to the development of the disease. A team led by Professor Leszek Borysiewicz of the

University of Wales College of Medicine has developed a vaccine containing proteins from HPV, designed to provoke the immune system into rejecting the tumour.

Together with scientists from the Paterson Institute in Manchester and Cantab Pharmaceuticals in Cambridge, the team injected 100 women with the vaccine. The women were given a single dose of the vaccine. There were no significant side effects, and three of the women developed anti-

bodies against HPV. While six of the eight have died, two are alive, 15 and 21 months after the vaccination.

One woman developed the disease in 1986. She had surgery and radiotherapy but in July 1994 cancer was still present. After the vaccination it disappeared, and she remains well.

"We cannot conclude that the vaccination was responsible but the observation warrants further investigation," the team reports.

Gene analysis endorses Africa evolution theory

GENETIC analysis has lent strong support to the idea that modern humans evolved in Africa (Nigel Hawkes writes).

A team led by Dr John Armour, of the University of Nottingham, has found that African populations have a wider range of variations in a section of DNA than people from anywhere else. This means modern man has been evolving longer in Africa. The rest of us have a narrower range of variation, having originated relatively recently from a subset of the African populations.

From Onan to the Pill — history's precautionary tale



MEDICAL BRIEFING

THE history of contraception dates from at least 4000 BC, or even earlier if the historical accuracy of the book of Genesis is accepted: by the 39th chapter Onan, who realised that family solidarity would not be improved if his brother's wife conceived his child, was practising the withdrawal method.

Delegates to the annual meeting of the Faculty of Family Planning and Health Care at Regent's College in London today will be able to view a museum of contraception. The exhibits were collected by a Canadian, Percy Skuy, and have been brought over from Ontario by Janssen-Cilag Pharmaceuticals.

By 1500 BC a method using a medicated lint vaginal sponge was popular. Strangely the ancients had hit upon a method which, even if it would not pass today's stringent drug regulations, did have some effect on conception as the lint was soaked in a mixture of acacia, dates and honey. Acacia ferments into lactic acid, which is still in use as a spermicide.

Early Egyptians also wore condoms but, as is advocated today, they were used as much to prevent the spread of disease as to prevent conception. Strangely, the wearing of a condom — and its type — denoted the social rank of the male. The Egyptian women could recognise the status of their lover by the style of his condom. As in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, the ancient Egyptian condoms were made from animal guts.

By the second century AD, various forms of tampons, sponges, vaginal plugs and pessaries were in use. In the more exotic parts of the world, crocodile or elephant dung was mixed with sodium bicarbonate to form a pessary, but in the more sophisticated societies lemon juice or vinegar was

preferred. Whatever the substances used, their objective was the same: to change the vagina's acidity so that the environment became hostile to semen, and the sticky material would be able to act as a physical barrier to passage of sperm through the cervix.

Condoms — the name is derived from the 17th-century court physician — to Charles II — were the popular method of contraception in Britain for several hundred years. They were expensive and the best ones were made of sheep caecum, a blind alley in the large gut of the animal. A pink ribbon, like a purse string, could be tied around its end so that it would fit.

Some condoms also had pornographic pictures painted on them. A photograph of one, shown in the museum, was recently sold at Christie's for £4,000.

The museum contains a wide variety of intra-uterine devices, for, although modern doctors think of these as dating from the 1930s, they were first used more than 3,000 years ago, when well-shaped and polished pebbles were inserted.

Caps which fit over the cervix range from the half-lemon, popularised by Casanova, who was particularly careful to choose and cut one of the appropriate size for his lovers.

Women have been swallowing various substances to prevent conception since more than 4,000 years ago, when Chinese women took mercury in small doses. In the 16th century, women in the remotest parts of Canada were placing their faith in drinking a mixture of strong alcohol laced with strong beaver's testes. In Mexico they were relying upon a foul-smelling wild yam.

Thankfully, today's wide choice of contraceptive measures are clean, comparatively safe — and have the advantage that they work.

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Poll shows young and affluent favour staying in Europe

BY PETER RIDDELL

PUBLIC attitudes to the European Union are sharply divided along lines of party, gender, class, income and age, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll shows that, by a small majority, the public still favours British membership of the EU, but there has been a big increase in opposition to further integration, in particular a Supreme Court of Europe and strengthening the European Parliament.

Europe is now much higher on people's list of concerns. The proportion of those mentioning it as among the most important issues facing Britain has risen over the past month by nine points to 29 per cent, its highest since November 1991. It still lags behind unemployment, health and education.

Undertaken last weekend after the Government announced its policy of non-cooperation over the beef ban, the poll shows that three-fifths of the public favour a referendum on whether Britain should leave the EU. This is broadly the same as when the question was last asked, a year ago.

If such a referendum were held, 44 per cent would now want Britain to stay in, with 39 per cent wanting Britain to get out. This net balance of five points compares with seven in October 1993 and a peak of 34 points in 1990. But in the early 1980s, when Labour opposed entry, there was a sizeable majority in favour of getting out.

Support for staying in the EU is highest among long-term supporters of the Labour Party and is lowest among Liberal Democrat loyalists. This reflects the long-term paradox that Liberal Democrat supporters are the most

Euro-sceptical while their leaders are the most pro-European. Those who have shifted their votes, including those who have switched away from the Tories since the 1992 election, are more sceptical than party loyalists.

Since October 1993, professionals and managers ("ABs") have become more positive about membership while other non-manual workers ("CIs") have become cooler.

Overall, there are very big class and income differences. Whereas those in households with incomes above £25,000 a year favour staying in by a margin of 35 percentage points, those with incomes of less than £9,500 want to leave by a margin of seven points. Similarly, while professionals and managers want to stay in by a margin of 32 points, unskilled workers and others on very low incomes (DEs) want to leave by a 13-point margin.

Linked with income and social class, those who are generally optimistic about the outlook for the British economy favour staying in by a margin of 21 points while those who are pessimistic support leaving by an 11-point margin.

Men are more supportive of staying in the EU than women and backing for British membership is highest among 18 to 34-year-olds and declines sharply among older age groups.

Readers of tabloid papers favour leaving the EU by a 47 to 36 per cent margin, while readers of the broadsheet quality papers support remaining in by 68 to 28 per cent. Readers of *The Times* support remaining in the EU by a 69 to 29 per cent margin.

MORI also asked questions about attitudes to various European developments last

posed in October 1993. These show, for example, a slight increase in opposition to a single European currency, with the net balance of those against such a move rising from 27 to 35 points.

But the most striking change concerns legal and political integration. The net balance supporting a common system of legal practice has dropped from 43 to 28 points.

A 13-point balance in favour of introducing a Supreme Court of Europe has been transformed into a 3-point balance against. This shift reflects the controversy and media publicity surrounding the rulings of the European Court of Justice.

Opposition to transferring some powers to the European Parliament from national parliaments has also risen, with the balance against rising from 39 to 46 points.

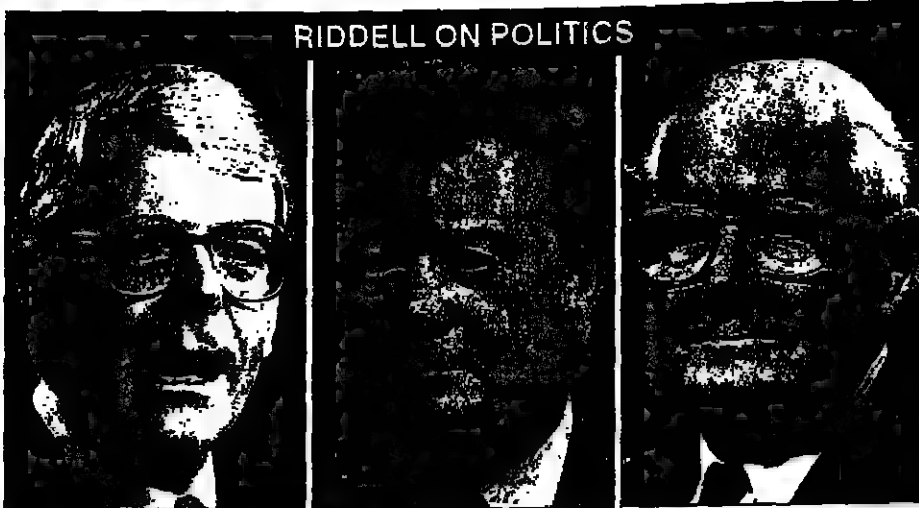
□ MORI interviewed 1,620 adults at 137 ward sampling points, May 23-26.

Making waves will not turn electoral tide

THE public favours a tough line over the beef crisis and is becoming more sceptical about Europe but is unwilling to give any credit to the Government. Yesterday's MORI poll for *The Times*, the first survey of voting intentions since Britain began its policy of non-cooperation, startled party strategists.

Even those of us who believed that non-cooperation was diplomatically mistaken and would be politically counter-productive in the long term thought that the Tories might receive at least some short-term boost in the polls. But that has not happened, at any rate not yet. It is starting to dawn on some Tory MPs and strategists that the Commons cheers of ten days ago and the shrill jingoism of the tabloids means nothing.

There are three probable explanations. First, that the tough action against Brussels mainly appeals to committed Tory supporters rather than to wavering voters. Second, that most people blame the Government rather than Brussels for the beef crisis. Third, and perhaps most worrying for the Tories, the public in particular voters who have deserted the Tories



RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Major's beef war will not sway voters as much as Clarke's economic arguments, but both are vulnerable to the kind of sea change that Callaghan predicted

since the 1992 election, have given up on the Government. This suggests that John Major can do little to change their views, or rather to persuade enough of them to return to the fold to save the election.

Even though the economy has been recovering for a long time, unemployment has fallen sharply and living standards have, more recently, started rising again, there has been only a limited pick-up in the much-quoted "feel-good" factor or economic

optimism index. Unlike previous optimism, the link between improvements in economic optimism and voting intentions has become much looser. The recovery in Tory ratings over the past 18 months has been much smaller than the pick-up in optimism.

The MORI economic optimism index — measuring those who think that the general economic condition will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months — stands at -10

points. While it was -6 points at the end of April, the underlying trend is upwards. But the Tory rating has been flat since the autumn. Just as the Government is getting little credit for the economic recovery, so it is getting no benefit over the beef crisis.

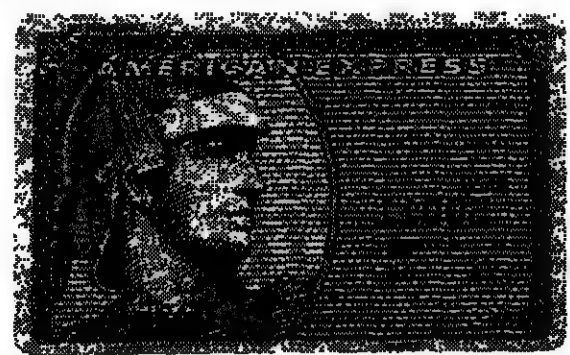
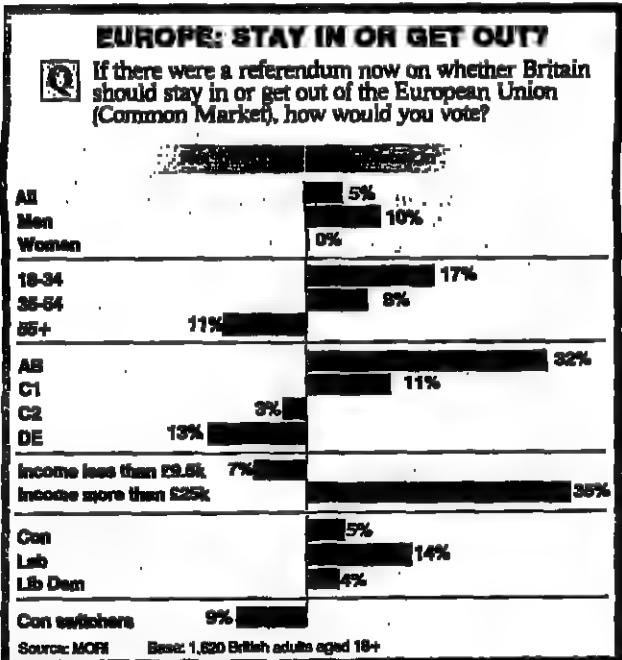
That interpretation ties in with the view of Tory fatalists who believe that the "time for a change" mood will counter-balance any further pick-up in economic optimism. Some more pessimistic Tories recall Lord Callaghan of Car-

diff's famous comment, towards the end of the 1979 election campaign, about sea changes in public attitudes once in a generation which parties cannot resist.

The most recent polls suggest that the public has made up its mind. Of course, the precise figures in the latest polls, or in the local elections a month ago, will not be repeated at a general election. Polls cannot forecast elections like that. But they do indicate the size of the task faced by the Tories and how dramatic initiatives such as the confrontation with Brussels over beef are unlikely to change these views.

Instead, all the Tories can do is to be patient, avoid unnecessary and probably doomed risks like non-cooperation and seek to highlight flaws in Labour's approach. As Kenneth Clarke said in his interview with *The Times* yesterday, the Tories' best — indeed, probably only — card is to argue that people would become even better off and that unemployment would fall further as long as they elected the Tories rather than Labour. It will probably not be enough, but the Tories do not have any other cards left.

PETER RIDDELL



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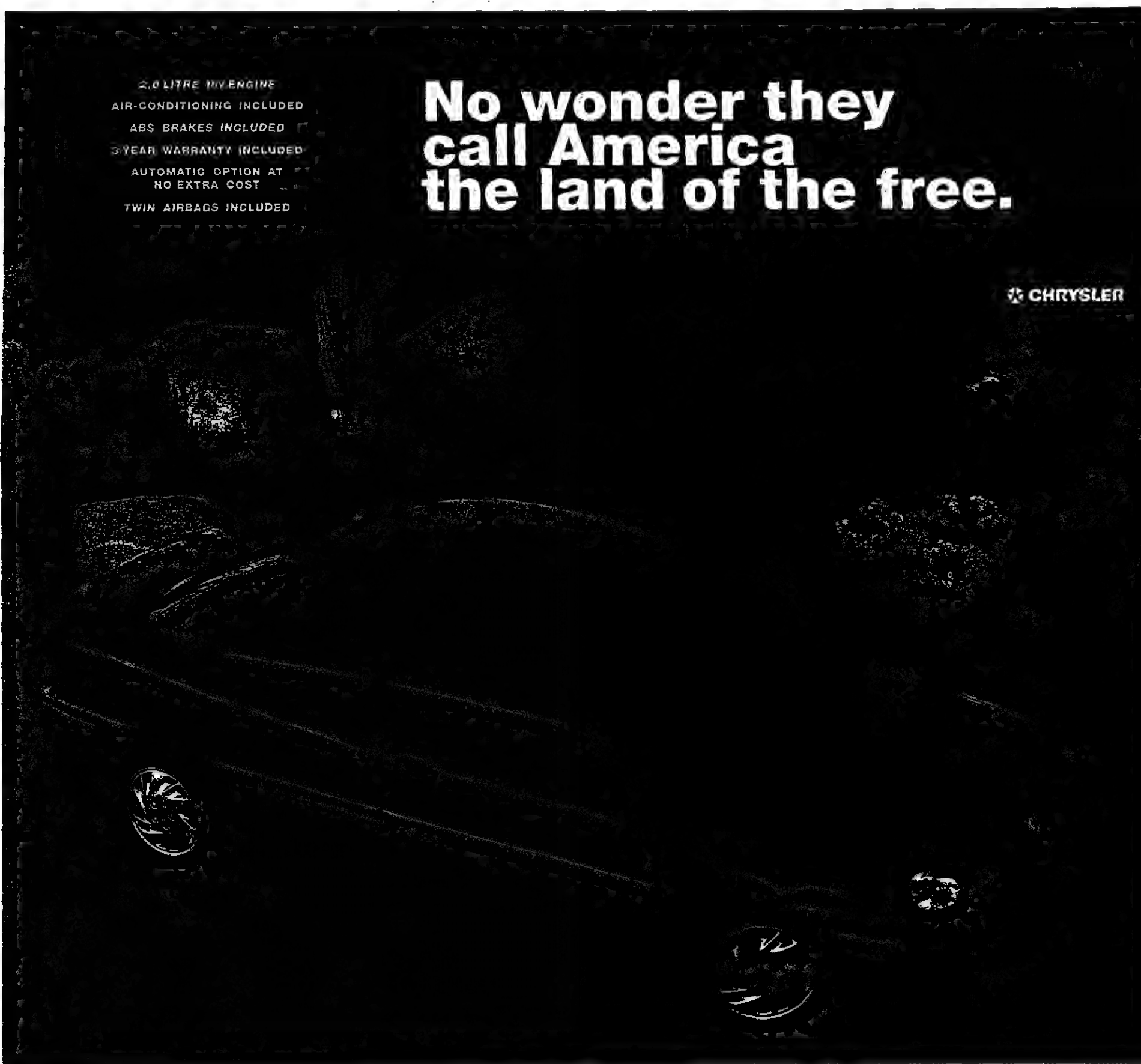
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Alarm raised over wave of attacks on visitors to China

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

THE Foreign Office has issued a new warning to travellers in China about increasing attacks on foreigners.

Thefts and muggings in the main cities and crime on trains are increasing, as are thefts on overnight train and coach journeys. "Foreigners are now regular targets," the Foreign Office says.

Until recently, foreigners were regarded as a kind of "protected species" in China, unlikely to come to harm. But free-market reforms, growing disparities of wealth, corruption, and the influx of landless peasants seeking jobs in cities have created a new situation.

Long-term foreign residents recall the days, especially up to 1976 when Mao Tse-tung was still alive, when it was difficult to leave behind a discarded razor-blade or lipstick in a hotel room, because it might follow the guest to the next destination just in case it had been "forgotten". But those days are long past.

The Foreign Office also gives a warning of extortion attempts against foreign businessmen staying in top-class hotels. The likely modus operandi is: a Chinese woman strikes up a conversation with a foreign man in the hotel bar; when he returns to his room, accomplices claiming to be police officers knock on his

door, saying that the woman has made an accusation of sexual harassment. They then make sometimes violent demands for money.

Last March David Swindells, 59, a British businessman, died of stab wounds in his room at the five-star Shangri-La Hotel in Shenzhen, a free-wheeling city near Hong Kong. Robbery was

"I feared a knife might be held to my ribs but I kept alert and the danger passed"

thought to be the motive. While travelling on the back of a crowded bus in Guangdong province, Graham Hutchings, a correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*, heard two men in front of him discussing how they might get hold of his money-belt. "I was concerned and wondered if I might get a knife held to my ribs, but I stayed alert and the danger passed," Hutchings said.

Recently a German woman was stabbed in Tiananmen

Square by a Chinese woman who disappeared into the crowd. The tourist survived, but considering that the authorities have declared 1997 "Visit China Year" these new trends are worrying foreign embassies, which have already warned their nationals to be careful in the area of Tiananmen Square in the run-up to the June 4 anniversary of the 1989 massacre.

"It is not an anti-foreign thing as such," one foreign diplomat said. "It is just that growing lawlessness is spreading beyond the Chinese community and we can expect more crackdowns like the present blitz."

Police firing squads, seeking to combat the surge in crime, have been carrying out operations throughout China as part of the Government's "severe strike" campaign, and authorities say the crackdown, which started in early May, is the most sweeping since 1994, when tens of thousands of criminals were caught over two months.

The crackdown and executions, criticised by Amnesty International but popular among ordinary Chinese who say that crime and official corruption are the two greatest evils affecting China, are not directly linked to the seventh anniversary next Tuesday of the violent suppression of pro-democracy protests. However, anyone planning fresh protests would get the point, diplomats say.

Some recent crimes:

□ **Murders:** Fourteen death sentences were passed against young men and women in southern Guangdong, where women lured 17 lorry drivers to their death with offers of sex. The drivers were killed by male accomplices and their vehicles stolen.

□ **Muggings:** Guests at a hotel on the outskirts of Peking were accosted by armed robbers.

□ **Robbery:** A senior parliamentary official was killed by his paramilitary bodyguard. The guard was executed earlier this month. It was public anger over this crime that seems to have led to the current crackdown by police.

My hellish journey on road to Fuzhou

BY JAMES PRINGLE

HAVING travelled extensively in some of the world's most violent countries — Colombia, Zaire, Uganda (under Idi Amin), Somalia and Cambodia — and never having encountered a serious problem, the last place I expected to find trouble was China. I therefore recently boarded a bus in Wenzhou, on China's east coast, for a ten-hour overnight journey to Fuzhou, in Fujian province, unconcerned about security.

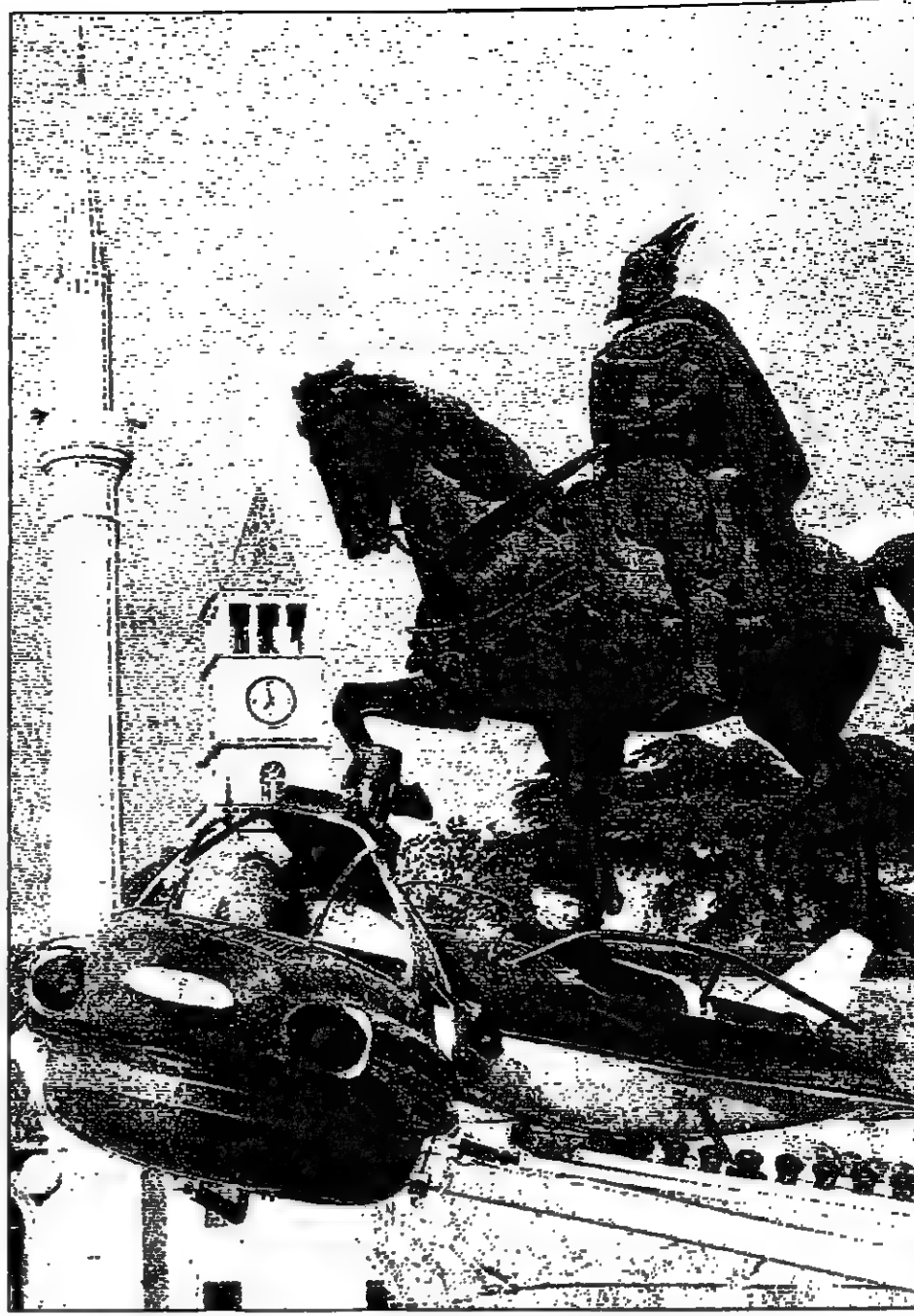
As I settled into my cramped bunk with my padlocked suitcase and briefcase containing a laptop computer below me on the one-third full coach, I thought there would be no problem, although I did notice that a young woman had chained her suitcase by padlock to the bunk support.

We ground on in the dark and rain over two mountain ranges: the noise was intense and I was not conscious of sleeping, but the next morning I found that my computer and printer taken, and the padlock on the suitcase had been picked, items removed and then relocked.

Fuzhou residents suggested it was as well I had not interrupted the theft, as anything could have happened. The police said that foreigners were being targeted and they promised to "strike heavy blows" at criminals operating between Fujian and Zhejiang provinces.

Later that day, while buying replacements for my stolen possessions in a Fuzhou department store, I was jostled by some *mingong* (rural transient labourers) and felt a hand dip quickly into my jacket pocket. I thought of knives and decided against making an issue of it. But the sense that I was in some kind of Kalkasque nightmare began to grow.

In the past year in China, I have seen knife fights between gangs, probably Triads, in the lobby of a government hotel in Shenzhen, near Hong Kong, seen bloody street fights in Guangzhou, in Sichuan, and been disturbed in hotel rooms in Fujian province by silken-voiced *Xiaojies* (Misses) calling up to my room and offering sex for money.



Children enjoy the fun fair yesterday in Tirana's Skanderbeg Square, scene of post-election clashes between opposition supporters and police this week

Voting fraud raises threat of civil war in Albania

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN TIRANA

THE Socialist opposition in Albania gave a warning yesterday that the country could slide into civil war after this week's chaotic general election, which international observers said was marred by blatant fraud.

The confusion threatens to destabilise one of the West's key allies in the Balkans. Yesterday Flaco Cotti, the Swiss Foreign Minister and chairman of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which supplied the international monitors, called for a partial rerun of the election "for the sake of democratic stability".

But President Berisha insisted that his Democratic Party had won a fair two-thirds majority, while he conceded yesterday that some irregularities had taken place, he rejected suggestions that these had influenced the outcome, promising four years of sweeping reforms.

The opposition parties with-

drew in the first round last Sunday, hours before polls closed, complaining of intimidation and fraud. The Social Democratic leader, Skender Gjinushi, yesterday said the opposition parties would boycott the second round this Sunday because first-round results had been "completely fabricated under secret police threats".

Opposition demonstrators held silent vigils in the central squares of all main towns. There were clashes in the southern town of Fier, but the protests elsewhere were largely peaceful, in contrast to events on Tuesday, when riot police charged crowds in Skanderbeg Square in the centre of Tirana and beat up opposition leaders.

The vast square was once used for regimented displays by the Stalinist dictator, Enver Hoxha. It is dominated by three symbols of modern Albania: an equestrian statue of the 15th-century patriot Skan-

derbeg, the central mosque — 70 per cent of Albanians are Muslim — and a children's fun fair.

President Berisha, the former heart surgeon who has ruled Albania since 1992, had been admired in the West because of his attempts to open up this once isolated country and to encourage foreign investment. "The tables have turned," one Western observer said. "Once Berisha was the man who brought down the paranoid and despotic Communists. Now the former Communists — who have become the Socialists — see themselves as the democratic underdogs, with the President reverting to authoritarian habits."

In the 1992 elections the Democratic Party won a landslide, but economic problems — half the workforce is unemployed — have eroded Dr Berisha's popularity. His party nonetheless won 95 of the 140 seats in parliament.

WORLD SUMMARI

Delays on Rock earn royal joke

Gibraltar: The Duke of Edinburgh, visiting Gibraltar to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, drew loud applause when he said everyone had an adventurous expedition at some time, "even if it is only trying to get across the border into Spain" (Dominique Searle writes).

Over the past week Spain has imposed border queues of up to six hours to put pressure on Gibraltar over sovereignty and demanding that the new Government eradicate smuggling in the area.

'Bandit' insult threatens truce

Grozny: Doku Zavgayev, the Moscow-installed leader of Chechnya, criticised Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, the rebel chief who signed a truce deal with the Kremlin, as "a bandit who represents bandits". The remarks by Mr Zavgayev, whom President Yeltsin sidelined during the truce talks, could undermine implementation of the deal to end fighting in the breakaway republic from tonight. (Reuters)

Sudan robbers to be crucified

Khartoum: A court in Sudan has sentenced six men to hang and three to be crucified for armed robbery. Judge Ahmad Abu Zeid was also reported to have imprisoned several other men in connection with the case. Police said the robbers in northern Darfur had 85 Kalashnikov rifles with them when arrested. (Reuters)

Bernard Levin, page 18

Bodies of seized monks found

Paris: The Algerian Interior Ministry said it had discovered the bodies of seven French Trappist monks, aged between 50 and 82, abducted from their monastery by Muslim fundamentalist guerrillas in March. The bodies were found near Medea, southwest of Algiers. Their murders were mourned across France at the weekend. (Reuters)

Hutu suspects deny genocide

Arusha, Tanzania: The first two suspects to appear before the United Nations tribunal on Rwanda's ethnic slaughter in 1994 pleaded not guilty to genocide. Georges Rutaganda, an engineer aged 37, and Jean Paul Akayesu, 43, a local official, both Hutus, appeared at separate hearings.

Hopes rise for Siamese twins

Melbourne: The Siamese twins separated by surgeons at the Royal Children's Hospital here on Wednesday were "holding their own", a hospital spokeswoman said yesterday. There had been "a very, very slight improvement" in the condition of Easstina and Eusthacia Bostin, who were born on the Papua New Guinea island of Buka on May 14, attached from the chest to the navel and with their livers joined. Flown to Australia last week, they were separated in a five-hour operation. (AFP)



The twins prior to the operation that separated them

Stowaway hailed as a hero in Spain

FROM TUNIKU VARADARAMAN IN MADRID

AN ILLEGAL immigrant, who lost an eye and a leg after he went to the rescue of a 16-year-old girl being attacked in a Metro station here, has been granted Spanish residence in recognition of his bravery.

Miloud Khedari, a 24-year-old Algerian, had arrived in Spain as a stowaway on a ship only four days earlier. He went to Madrid where, on May 1, he saw the terrified girl being assaulted on the underground. The attacker was arrested by police, but not before he had hurt Mr Khedari in the path of a train.

The Algerian was rushed to hospital, but doctors could not save his right eye. His left leg had been cut off by the train. The incident attracted attention, and his ward in a Madrid hospital was inundated with flowers, chocolates and fruit, all gifts from Spanish well-wishers.

When Mr Khedari's immigration status came to light, a popular campaign began to secure residence for him and yesterday a government official brought him the papers he needs to live and work in Spain.

Mr Khedari's action has struck a chord with Spaniards, many of whom dislike the growing number of North African immigrants, whom they associate with drugs and crime. *Moro* (Moor) is used widely in Spain as a term of abuse, but as a friend of Mr Khedari said yesterday: "The Spanish have now learnt that a *Moro* can also be a hero."

Kashmir goes to polls amid violent protests and strikes

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA conducted a second unconvincing round of voting in the Kashmir Valley yesterday. It was a day of violence and strikes, with four people killed and dozens hurt and the streets almost bare, save for protesters who were forced back by security forces firing teargas and warning shots.

Witnesses said one person died and two were hurt when the paramilitary Border Security Force opened fire on a crowd after being attacked by suspected Muslim rebels in Srinagar. A border guard died after accidentally shooting himself during a stampede at an anti-election demonstration in the Kashmiri capital.

Another border guard died in a grenade attack by militants near Srinagar's police headquarters and the body of a third guard was found in Gurez district. Four soldiers on poll duty were wounded when their vehicle struck a

mine at Brindaban in Udhampur. Most leading Kashmiri Muslim separatist leaders were rounded up by the security forces — for their protection, according to the authorities. Border guards attacked journalists with rifle butts, injuring four. Much of the valley was at a standstill, proof of the continuing power of separatists who called a stoppage in protest at the elections.

Some people were ordered to polling stations by troops and paramilitary forces at the point of the gun, repeating the widespread practice of last week when two other parliamentary constituencies voted in the Kashmir Valley.

Despite an official turnout of 37 per cent, yesterday's voting in Srinagar, which marks the end of the Indian election, will be another embarrassment for Delhi. Kashmir was separated from polling in the rest of the

country to enable extra security forces to move in. This probably took the total security presence to more than 400,000.

Only pro-India parties took part. The Hurriyat Conference, an umbrella group of 30 separatist groups, boycotted the polls. Many voters complained of being sandwiched between armed separatists ordering them not to vote and troops telling them to do so.

Only pro-India parties took part. The Hurriyat Conference, an umbrella group of 30 separatist groups, boycotted the polls. Many voters complained of being sandwiched between armed separatists ordering them not to vote and troops telling them to do so.

BASIC RULES FOR TRAVELLERS

- Never open your hotel room door unless you know who is on the other side. You can buy police uniforms in shops in most Chinese cities and, given that many "policemen" may not be that at all, agree to see them only in the presence of senior hotel staff.
- Keep your money in your pocket and your camera bag on your bunk on trains and buses, and sit near the front of the bus close to the driver. In crowded department stores or buses keep money and passports in trouser pockets or, for women, inside a jacket, and beware the jostling crowds.
- Chat to the cheerful girls haunting hotel coffee shops and buy them an ice-cream, but leave it at that. Aids is spreading from Yunnan province to other areas and may be a timebomb. Stay clear of the growing drug scene.
- Beware hotel safes in anything other than four-star or five-star establishments.
- Remember that most Chinese would never harm you: they have become victims themselves, so do not let paranoia take over. Yet abandon the notion that nothing bad can happen in China, and adapt the prudence one would maintain in most other developing countries.

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ARTS 31-33

The Blue Nile: pop perfectionists with a very slow fuse



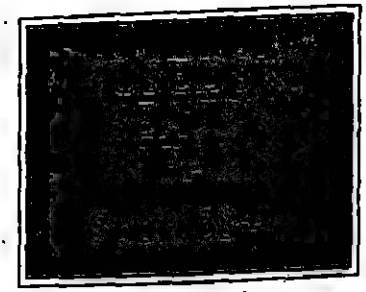
EDUCATION 35

Michael Barber on solving the nation's literacy crisis



ARTS 31

Loving tribute to Thirties musical escapism



THE TIMES

2

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY MAY 31 1996

OECD optimistic despite cut in this year's growth forecast

UK 'on course for inflation target'

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

THE British economy will grow by only 2 per cent this year — far lower than the Chancellor's forecast — but is set fair for healthy growth and low inflation in the longer term because of the structural economic reforms of the past 15 years, according to a new report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

As reported in *The Times* last week, the OECD revised its forecast for growth this

year down to 2 per cent from the 2.4 per cent it predicted in December. This is largely due to the unexpectedly sharp slowdown in continental European economies as members of the European Union attempt to cut their budget deficits in line with the Maastricht criteria.

The OECD's new projection leaves Kenneth Clarke's Budget-time forecast of 3 per cent this year even more isolated. It now seems a racing certainty that this will be revised down when the Treasury unveils its Summer Forecast in July.

In an interview with *The*

Times yesterday, Mr Clarke came the closest yet to conceding that he will have to lower his forecast. He said: "I will revise my target, perhaps, if in July it is obvious we have been a bit optimistic but I see no point in revising it now." He admitted that other people had forecasts which were "getting a lot lower than mine".

Gordon Brown, Shadow Chancellor, wrote to Mr Clarke yesterday, asking him to comment on the new OECD forecast. He said: "Just as happened last year, it would appear that growth will be lower than you forecast."

Under these circumstances, will you either justify your own forecast, or accept the OECD's forecast and spell out the implications for our public finances." The Chancellor is expected to invite Mr Brown to wait until the Summer Forecast in July.

Mr Clarke yesterday took an upbeat view of the OECD report, emphasising that the organisation was expecting the current slowdown in the British economy to be temporary and for growth to pick up strongly later this year and through into 1997. The OECD is predicting 2.75 per cent

growth next year coupled with inflation dropping to the 2.5 per cent targeted by the Government. It also expects unemployment to fall further and that the current account will remain near to balance. It said that, should the current slowdown in growth prove to be more pronounced, the benign inflation outlook would provide scope for a further cut in interest rates, although it urged caution.

The OECD expressed some disappointment about the slip-page that has been seen in getting the budget deficit down but seemed relatively

sanguine because the public finances are continuing to improve overall.

Most pleasing for the Government is broad praise for its handling of macro-economic policy decisions over the past three years, which the OECD said had laid a sound foundation for sustained economic recovery. It praised the structural reforms to the economy undertaken by the Conservatives since 1979 which had made Britain "a more flexible and less inflation prone economy". It suggested that labour market reforms had lowered the rate of unemployment at

which inflation does not accelerate to around 7 per cent or just below, implying that unemployment can fall further from current levels before igniting price pressures. The OECD said that Britain had a relatively good record at job creation and unemployment compared with many continental countries.

But the OECD also expressed concern about intractable problems such as long-term unemployment and Britain's relatively poor education standards compared with its main competitors. This gap needs to be closed, it said.

FT-SE 100	5748.7	(-29.0)
Yield	4.03%	
FT-SE All share	1894.42	(-11.57)
Nikkei	21896.32	(-185.15)
New York		
Dow Jones	8645.78	(-28.07)
S&P Composite	864.91	(-3.02)
Federal Funds	5.75%	(5.75%)
Long Bond	89.75%	(89.75%)
Yield	6.95%	(6.95%)
3-mth Interbank	6.75%	(6.75%)
Life long gilt	105.75	(105.75)
New York		
\$	1.5345	(1.5311)
London		
\$	1.5345	(1.5311)
DM	2.3514	(2.3477)
FF	7.8819	(7.8444)
SF	1.5213	(1.5223)
Yen	163.12	(163.21)
E index	85.7	(85.4)
Tokyo close Yen	108.25	
Brent 15-day (Aug)	\$17.70	(\$18.15)
London close	\$361.30	(\$361.25)

* denotes midday trading price

Facia suitor late filing accounts in America

BY JASON NISSE

TEXAS American Group, the tiny US listed company in talks to rescue Facia, Stephen Hinchliffe's 850-shop retailer, is late filing its accounts with the US Securities & Exchange Commission.

Facia itself was supposed to file its 1995 accounts last November and faces prosecution by Companies House if they are not ready by July 1.

Bill Grosvenor, former PR advisor to Asil, Nadir, the fugitive tycoon, is now chief executive of Texas American. He said that the accounts had not appeared because the company completed a series of deals last December.

"We have obtained a dispensation under US accounting law," he said. "The accounts will appear before we complete the deal." However, the SEC was not able to confirm that a dispensation had been given. The last accounts for Texas American, a timeshare and golf course company operating out of an office in London's East End, are for 1994 and show revenues of just \$4,864 and losses of \$587,329.

Texas American is planning to buy Facia, whose brands include Sock Shop and Saxone, and finance the deal through an issue of shares on the US Nasdaq exchange. The deal is dependent on Facia producing accounts under US accounting standards.

Neither Facia nor Texas American would give a price for the deal, but Facia currently has debts of about £10 million and needs to find £12 million in the next few weeks to pay the rents on its shops.

Mr Grosvenor, who says he was invited to become chief executive last December after giving the company PR advice, said Texas American would wish to keep Mr Hinchliffe on board as long as he succeeds in his fight against

the Department of Trade & Industry's plans to disqualify him as a director.

The DTTI's action follows the 1993 collapse of Boregry, a company sold by Mr Hinchliffe shortly before falling.

Texas American's operations are all in Europe. It owns Bratton Park golf course near Huntingdon and timeshares in Tenerife and Portugal.

The Portuguese business was bought from Verit Industries, a US group currently in Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Alan Humphrey, Texas American's president, was also president of Verit whose chief executive was John Carway, a controversial Irish businessman with convictions for cheque fraud and possession of cannabis.

Last year, the Irish authorities criticised Mr Carway over dealings in County Glen, an Irish company, saying his family benefited from dealings that cost the group £1 million. Both Mr Grosvenor and Facia deny that Mr Carway is at all involved in this deal.

Mr Grosvenor said the other directors of Texas American were a Texan lawyer, Robert E Lee, and a former Portuguese politician, Emidio Serrano. SEC filings declare a further director, David Gough, who is also heads up Questmead Investments, a British Virgin Islands company.

Questmead has emerged as a supporter of attempts by Andrew Greystoke, the financier, to avoid bankruptcy through an individual's voluntary arrangement. Mr Greystoke, who has debts of £4.3 million, is also fighting attempts to disqualify him as a director over his role in City & Westminster, a finance company that collapsed in 1991.

Pennington, page 25



Sir Desmond Pitcher, right, United Utilities chairman, and Brian Staples, chief executive. The group reported for the first time yesterday

Multi-utility to seek alliances

UNITED UTILITIES, which supplies water and electricity in the North West, is seeking alliances with generators and gas producers ahead of the deregulation of the electricity market in 1998 (Christine Buckley writes).

United's electricity business suffered a £30 million profit fall in the year to March 31. The company, which recently raised domestic prices by 4.9 per cent, largely blamed the high prices it had to pay for electricity. Group pre-tax profits rose 34.8 per cent to £464.2 million, the first figures since the integration of North West Water and Norweb last autumn. A £103.8 million charge was taken to restructure the businesses. The final dividend rose 11 per cent to 19.59p, making 32.60p (25.55p).

Tempus, page 26

HSBC set to retreat over £16m bonuses

BY OLIVER AUGUST

DIRECTORS at HSBC Holdings, the parent company of Midland Bank, look set to back down over their controversial £16 million incentive scheme, after intense pressure from shareholders ahead of today's annual meeting.

In discussions with representatives from major shareholders, HSBC said that the terms for directors' remuneration would not be operated as set out in the annual report. The six directors are currently in line for a compound bonus of up to £16 million for what is described as "mediocre performance".

Anne Simpson, a director of Pensions and Investment Research Consultants (PIRC), which represents institutional shareholders, said: "It is not acceptable that they give us private reassurances that they won't pay themselves as much as they actually can under the terms of the scheme. We want it in writing."

PIRC is expecting considerable shareholder opposition to the HSBC scheme, unless the directors issue new written conditions. Under the current conditions, directors will be eligible for bonuses if earnings per share grow by at least 2 per cent above inflation, which is in line with Treasury growth forecasts for the economy as a whole.

Pennington, page 25

Societies seek to win over bank customers

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

BUILDING societies are stepping up their campaign to poach customers from high street banks by drawing up a charter promising good service and high savings rates. It is expected to be in place by the end of the year and will spell out the societies' commitment to mutuality and to offering some of the most competitive deals in the market.

Bradford & Bingley, Yorkshire, Nationwide and Coventry building societies believe the charter is the best way to deter speculators and encourage long-term savers. They believe that over the next two years members who stayed put to ensure they were paid share windfalls when their societies converted to banks will be looking for a new home for their money.

Brian Davies, chairman of the

US compliance chief accused of inside deal

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

A FORMER executive of Bankers Trust who was responsible for ensuring that the New York bank's employees did not violate US securities laws has been arrested and charged with insider dealing.

Nir Kantor, 39, who was vice-president of compliance, has been charged by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) with using information gained within the bank to trade in shares of Caesar's World before its takeover by ITT Corp, a Bankers client, in 1994. He faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and a \$1 million fine.

The charges come at a time when Bankers is getting over being embroiled in court actions in which clients claimed it mis-sold derivatives products in the early 1990s. Bankers recently settled out of court a multi-million dollar case brought by Procter & Gamble.

The SEC alleges that Mr Kantor bought and sold call options in Caesar's World even though it was on the bank's "Grey List" of companies about which Bankers has inside information and in whose shares employees are not allowed to deal. Mr Kantor's job was to enforce that ban.

Mr Kantor learnt of the Caesar's World deal, in which Bankers was advising ITT, at a compliance meeting. The SEC claims that he passed the information to Hanan Weizman, a cousin, who also profited from it. Mr Kantor allegedly bought option contracts on the shares and sold them when the takeover became public.

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Record exports make little impact on deficit trend

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

RECORD exports helped Britain to cut its visible trade deficit. The deficit declined from £1.3 billion in February to £800 million in March, ahead of City expectations, while the underlying trade deficit, excluding oil and erratics, fell from £1.8 billion to £1.5 billion in February.

Total exports increased by 3.5 per cent in March to £13.5 billion, although half the rise was accounted for by exports of precious stones.

But the deficit in the first

quarter of this year widened to £3.5 billion from £3.2 billion in the last quarter of 1995. There was also concern over figures showing that the trade deficit with non-EU countries increased sharply in April to £868 million from £676 million in March, although half of the increase was because of a big jump in aircraft orders.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS), which prepared the trade figures, described the deficit trend as "flat", but many economists

fear that the recent pick-up in consumer activity will lead to the deficit widening later in the year as the country sucks in imports.

Over the first quarter, total exports rose 3 per cent, with export growth to the EU outstripping the growth in exports to the rest of the world and narrowing the EU trade deficit. First-quarter import growth totalled 3.5 per cent, with a 4 per cent rise in imports from EU countries.

The ONS also published a

major revision to the trade figures for last year, showing that prices were weaker than expected and volume growth much stronger, although the overall value of trade figures is unchanged. Export volume growth in the last quarter of 1995, for instance, has been adjusted to 4.1 per cent year-on-year, compared with a previous estimate of 2.8 per cent. The revised figures imply that manufacturing growth was much stronger than previously estimated in 1995. This extra growth should show through in a positive revision of 1995 GDP growth figures from 2.5 to 2.6 per cent.

A Treasury spokesman said: "The fact that prices were weaker than expected and volumes stronger is good news for competitiveness and inflation."

But economists said the revised figures will have limited impact on the disappointing first-quarter GDP figures as the change in export prices for manufacturers this year has not been very different from that suggested by the revised figures.

Anthony Harris, page 27

US growth is revised down

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

AMERICAN growth in the first quarter was revised down yesterday as business cut stock levels instead of building them up as the US Government had thought.

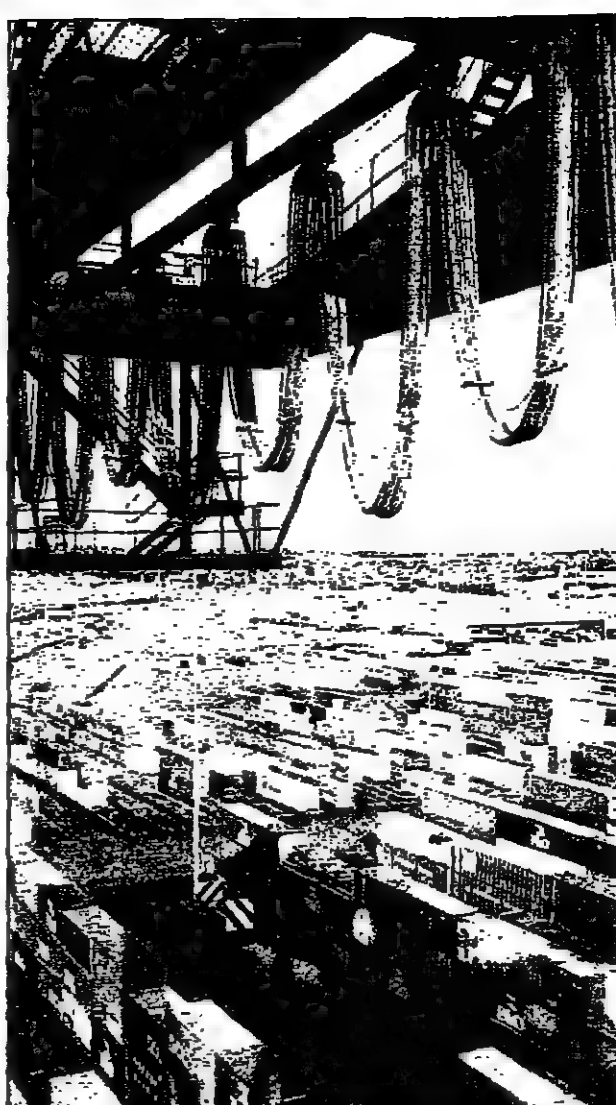
Gross domestic product is now judged to have risen 2.3 per cent, instead of 2.8 per cent, much less than the 2.7 per cent that Wall Street economists expected. This shows how

hard it is to forecast growth when there are big swings in stock levels, but does not materially change analysts' view of the US economy.

The 2.3 per cent is still far stronger than the 0.5 per cent growth in the final quarter of 1995, and economists expect growth to have strengthened in the second quarter, not least because consumer

spending is robust and more of this will be met from new production rather than stocks.

□ The Bundesbank left German interest rates unchanged and kept a fixed money market repo rate rather than reverting to a variable one, which might have signalled a desire to trim interest rates further.



Britain's total exports increased 3.5 per cent in March

Stock Exchange clears way for trading reforms

By PATRICIA TEHAN AND ROBERT MILLER

THE Stock Exchange has cleared the way for reform with publication of proposals for electronic trading services.

The Exchange will spend next month consulting market participants and has sought responses to its proposals by July 12. These were formulated after earlier consultations.

Giles Varley, director of markets development, said the responses would be made public and he hoped the new system would be in place by next summer.

The Securities & Investments Board yesterday outlined its plans for a parallel consultation process, seeking views on how tax privileges should be allocated to the firms that put their own capital at risk in the new, reformed trading system.

The SIB has set a three-week deadline for responses so that its advice on possible obligations for firms that wish to benefit from stamp duty relief can be fed into the exchange's consultation.

The Chancellor, who raises £1.2 billion a year from stamp

duty on share transactions, has already said that he sees "some merit" in keeping the tax benefits. But he will not give wholesale tax exemptions without the beneficiaries contributing something very tangible to the liquidity and transparency of London's share markets in return.

In its proposals yesterday, the Exchange detailed a new two-tier system for trading FTSE 100 shares. It expects more than 50 per cent of trading in them to be carried out via the new electronic order book. But to cope with institutional demand for big block trades and to maintain market liquidity, brokers known as "registered principal traders" (RPTs) will have an obligation to provide quotes to buy or sell large blocks of shares on request.

In order to ensure brokers use the order book system, the Exchange proposes that if shares are on the order book at the same price quoted by RPTs they must take the shares from the order book before trading their own stock.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

ISS shares hit by accounting errors

ISS-International, the contract cleaning group based in Denmark, saw its shares plunge 23 per cent yesterday after disclosing that accounting errors discovered at its US subsidiary could cost \$100 million. The company also announced the departure of its chief financial officer, Arthur Andersen has been replaced as auditor by KPMG, which will conduct a new audit on June 30.

ISS said that preliminary checks indicated that ISS Inc overstated profits by an accumulated \$30 million and underestimated liability insurance provisions by \$40 million. ISS shares, trading on the Copenhagen stock market, fell 32 Danish crowns to 131 crowns. ISS added that it would take between two and three years to restore the fortunes of its US business, which is now headed by British-born Martin O'Halloran, 42, who uncovered the irregularities while moving the American head offices from New York to Atlanta.

ING advances by 41%

ING, the Dutch banking group that bought Barings from the administrators last year, unveiled a 41.5 per cent rise in net profits to 736 million guilders (£280 million) in the first quarter of 1996. Pre-tax profits rose 44 per cent to 1.06 billion guilders. Banking profits were up 92.2 per cent to 490 million guilders, while insurance operations contributed 508 million guilders, up 17.8 per cent. The bank does not show the Barings results separately but said commission income in its banking operation rose 82.5 per cent to 595 million guilders.

Alpha profit warning

ALPHA AIRPORTS, the in-flight catering and airport retail group, yesterday gave warning to shareholders of an expected fall in half-year profits as a result of lower spending per passenger, combined with losses from its US kitchens. The group, which has 48 per cent of the UK in-flight catering market, said retail services and ground sales had been strong, but results would be hit by the loss of the British Airways contract last June. The shares fell 6p to 114p.

Emap 'auction' expected

SPECULATION is mounting that Emap, the media group, will soon announce that it intends to sell off its regional newspaper group. The asking price for the 77 core titles and supplements is said to be close to £220 million. It is understood that Northcliffe Newspapers, Johnstone Press and Newsquest Media Group will all be invited to bid for the regional newspaper group on a "closed auction" basis. Emap shares fell 4p to 704p.

Euro Telecom price set

SHARES in European Telecom, the international mobile phone company, will be priced at 115p when they come to the Stock Exchange via a placing next Thursday, valuing the company at £35.7 million. The company, which made pre-tax profits of £2.4 million on sales of £78 million in the year to March 31, will raise £6.5 million from the placing. It said that its outlook had been boosted by a national distribution deal with Orange, the mobile phone company.

Mid Kent surges

MID KENT WATER, the subject of a hostile takeover bid, yesterday reported a 48 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £12.3 million in the year to March 31, and a 90 per cent rise in the total dividend to 24p. The shares rose 33p to 469p. Sales rose to £41.3 million (£37 million) and earnings per share rose from 37.3p to 53.7p. The bid from the French groups General Utilities and Saur Water Services, has been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

UK 'must be' at EMU talks

JACK WIGGLESWORTH, chairman of the London International Financial Futures Exchange, gave warning at its annual meeting that leading City institutions could suffer if the Government is not at the centre of detailed EU negotiations for economic and monetary union.

"If EMU goes ahead, the City cannot stand aside. The exchange has no view as to whether the Government should take a decision to take the UK into EMU," he said. "But the Government must be at negotiating tables battling for the City's interests, and hence for those of the UK and of Europe itself, to the maximum extent possible."

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.02	1.86
Austria Sch	17.92	16.02
Belgium Fr	51.25	46.96
Canada \$	2.207	2.047
Cyprus Cyp£	0.788	0.703
Denmark Kr	9.84	8.84
Finland Mk	7.82	7.17
France Fr	6.36	5.77
Germany Dm	2.50	2.29
Greece Dr	387	352
Hong Kong \$	12.49	11.49
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Italy Lit	5.43	4.78
Japan Yen	179.40	163.40
Malta \$	0.394	0.359
Netherlands G	2.78	2.56
New Zealand \$	2.38	2.18
Norway Kr	10.59	9.79
Portugal Esc	253.00	234.50
Spain Ptas	166.64	150.50
Sweden Kr	11.02	10.22
Switzerland Fr	2.06	1.89
Turkey Lira	124.31	116.31
USA \$	1.608	1.498

Rates for small denominations. Bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



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*Manufacturer's recommended retail price, correct at time of going to press. Is for the XJ Executive including cost of delivery, number plates, a full tank of petrol and £140 for 12 months' road fund licence. *Offer applies to Jaguar Privilege finance schemes arranged prior to 31 August 1996 and excludes forecourt costs (tyres, fuel and oil top-ups). Written questionnaire available on request from Jaguar Financial Services Limited, Telford Place, Great Cambridge Road, Telford, Shropshire, Staffs. EN10 6N4. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18 years olds only.

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

US interest rate threat hits shares and bonds

THE threat of higher American interest rates had the London stock market on the ropes, with both government bonds and equities suffering sharp falls.

Evidence of growing inflation was accompanied by threats from the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates. It left US treasury bonds nursing hefty losses and led to another sell-off in equities, prompting suggestions that the long-awaited correction in New York's fortunes may be under way. Traders now fear a repeat of the sharp fall earlier this month.

London could offer little resistance to the bears. The FT-SE 100 index closed 29.0 points down at 3,746.7 having been almost 35 points lower at one stage. Trading conditions remained thin, with fewer than 700 million shares changing hands.

A profits warnings from Redland, the building products group, left the shares 8p lower at 396p. Rudolph Agnew told the annual meeting that bad weather conditions in Europe were likely to result in first-half profits being well down on the corresponding period last year.

He said conditions were recovering and the second half should be broadly in line with the second six months of last year. Volumes had returned to normal levels, but the underlying level was still below last year in most of its operating companies on the Continent.

Alpha Airports went into a tailspin, falling 1p to 16p after warning that first-half profits would fail to match those achieved last year. It blamed losses in its US kitchens operation and lower spending per passenger on flight catering. Granada Group, down 3p at 816p, continues to hold a 25 per cent stake in Alpha following its demerger.

United Utilities, the subject of last year's merger between North West Water, fell 19p to 580p after failing to live up to expectations. Pre-tax profits were down 4 per cent at £272.6 million after restructuring costs totalling £123.8 million. The group complained that last year's drought had cost £24 million and that reservoirs were still only 40 per cent full.

South West Water, the subject of two bids from Severn Trent and Wessex, held steady at 671p after coming in with full-year figures at the top end



Shares in Redland, the building products group, slipped 8p

of expectations. Pre-tax profits were up from £63.2 million to £109.1 million. South West has made it clear it is opposed to both bids, which were referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission last week. But in what is seen as the first move in its defence, the group has raised the total dividend 11.5 per cent to 30.5p, with the promise of an increase

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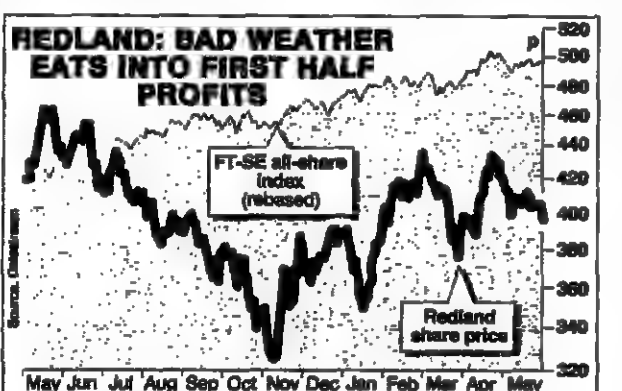
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Tomkins, the guns to buns group, rose 9p to 256p in spite of admitting that its billion dollar acquisition of Gates was taking longer than expected. It forecasts pre-tax profits of £320 million, about £10 million below previous estimates. But the pill was sweetened with news of a 15 per cent rise in the payout.

The clearing banks were marked lower, unsettled by this week's cut in Cheltenham & Gloucester's rate that revived fears of a further intensification of the mortgage price war. Barclays Bank fell 12 1/2p to 755 1/2p. HSBC 10p to 975p. Abbey National 11p to 538p. Midland Western Bank 4p to 624p. Royal Bank of Scotland 7p to 522p.

Whitecross Group, which operates a chain of dental practices in the London area, made a confident debut on the Alternative Investment Market. Placed at 84p, the shares started life at 91p before closing at their best of the day with an 11p rise at 95p.

A recent newcomer, Laminar, the theme restaurant chain that includes the Chicago Rock Café, continued to make headway, finishing 6p better at 286p. The shares were floated at 200p earlier this month, on the same day Railtrack made its debut. Railtrack closed last night unchanged at 214p. That compares with its original offer price of 190p.

GIIT-EDGED: London opened with losses stretching 1 1/2p in response to the overnight setback for US Treasury Bonds following the disappointing response to the two-year bond auction and talk that the Fed is poised to raise interest rates. The decision of the Bundesbank to peg German interest rates also dampened sentiment.

The losses accelerated to almost 1 1/2p at one stage before rallying to close off the bottom. In the futures pit, the June series of the Long Gilt ended 1 1/2p lower at £105 1/2 as a total of 86,000 contracts were completed. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 lost 7 1/2p at £96 1/2, while in shorts, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was £112 1/2 lower at £101 1/2.

NEW YORK: The Dow Jones industrial average remained under pressure in early trading after economic data sparked fears of accelerated economic growth. At midday, the index was down 28.07 points to 5,645.76.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 5645.76 (-28.07)
S&P Composite 664.91 (-3.02)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 21886.35 (-131.15)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 11197.07 (-43.49)

Amsterdam:
BOE Index 565.03 (-1.69)

Sydney:
ASX 2252.31 (-10.9)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2827.31 (-24.14)

Singapore:
Straits 2332.91 (-1.51)

Brussels:
General 3345.46 (-78.57)

Paris:
CAC-40 2108.44 (-8.66)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 778.50 (-7.60)

London:
FT 30 3746.7 (-29.0)

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TEMPUS

United by doubts

THE benefits of the synergy won from North West Water and Norweb have yet to fully show themselves in the share price of United Utilities, the new manifestation of the two.

Since March, when United gave an update of the efficiencies coming from the integration, the shares have been languishing at a level that indicates City caution. Concern rumbles among some analysts that either dividend growth will not be as strong as promised or that something could unhinge the grand plans of Britain's first multi-utility.

In many ways, yesterday's results more than justified the promises made just after North West Water won the battle for its electricity neighbour. Cost savings have fed in faster and in greater quantity. Although the balance sheet is more stretched than the average utility and the interest cover is lower,

SOUTH WEST WATER'S better than expected pre-tax profit figures came as an oasis of good news. The company is facing two unwanted bids and customers with bad memories of last summer.

The company will now be hoping that the good results and the higher than forecast dividend will convince shareholders that, should the bids be allowed by the MMC and by Ian Lang, they are better off with South West Water than with Wessex or Severn Trent. Promises that there will be further substantial dividend rises to come should also help.

But the real test for the company has yet to come: will South West do what it is meant to and supply customers with all the water they want? The £10 rebate to each

customer will be welcomed but may not be enough to wipe out the memories of hosepipe bans.

In spite of the dry winter, the company says that all its reservoirs are full except for its largest, Rouding, which is 46 per cent full. To avoid another lambasting, the company has to prove that, come what may, it can keep

its customers supplied with water. It also has to avoid the sort of compensation payouts that resulted from last year's drought, and which have shown up in results.

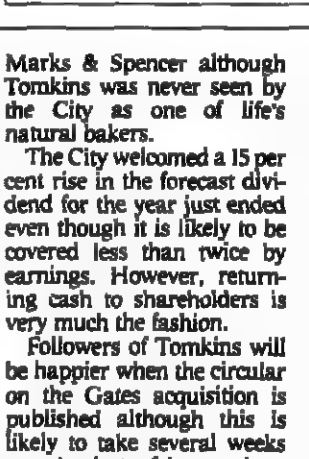
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Tomkins

IT LOOKED as if conglomerates were coming back into fashion yesterday in spite of the decision of Hanson, the father of them all, to break up into four companies, and the corresponding fall from favour of BTG.

The trigger was a buoyant statement on prospects from Tomkins, up 9p to 256p, which also helped shares in Williams up 7p to 336p during a day when the bears seemed to have a firm hold on markets.

The news on prospects from Tomkins was thought by the City strong enough to raise the shares a buy in spite of the lack of concrete developments on the Gates acquisition. Tomkins is still surprising City sceptics with the strength of RHM, a more controversial acquisition than Gates is likely to prove.

RHM still sees further opportunity for developing high value-added recipe dishes for customers such as

Marks & Spencer although Tomkins was never seen by the City as one of life's natural bears.

The City welcomed a 15 per cent rise in the forecast dividend for the year just ended even though it is likely to be covered less than twice by earnings. However, returning cash to shareholders is very much the fashion.

Followers of Tomkins will be happier when the circular on the Gates acquisition is published although this is likely to take several weeks.

Analysts felt somewhat reassured when the delay so far was put down to US regulators.

LIG

TWO years into a three-year recovery programme and London International, the company group, has amply demonstrated the wisdom of going back to what it does best. Analysts were impressed by its 72 per cent rise in pre-tax profits and a num-

ber have raised forecasts for this year. Sales growth last year was the clear engine for the profits improvement, and more is expected from the group's core businesses.

In particular, the impact of recent acquisitions such as Aladon, the US group, will begin to be seen in the current year. Aladon both reinforces LIG's strong position in the medical glove market and in the international market for unbranded condoms.

Shares in LIG have had a good run recently, and on a price-earnings multiple of just under 20, the group is at a 35 per cent premium to the market. The promise of strong earnings growth, further benefits of the recovery programme to come and confidence in LIG's management ability to deliver, however, is likely to underpin its attractions.

In the short term, a number of analysts rate the shares as a hold, expecting to see the share

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Olympic spirit carries on

PAUL GASCOIGNE, the England midfielder, was the focus of a heated forum at a conference in London yesterday, hosted by UPS, the package delivery company and Olympic sponsor.

Touching on the subject of Gaza and his antics on board a Cathay Pacific flight from Hong Kong, the former Olympic athlete Brendan Foster said: "It was his 29th birthday, with success behind him and a 13-hour flight ahead. You could hardly expect him to buy a couple of good books in duty-free."

Hot money

DAVID GRANT, director of William Grant & Sons, is lying low from the heavy hand of the law. At the Wine & Spirit Association commemorative luncheon this week, in a rush of adrenaline, Grant set fire to his own money. In his capacity as chairman of the Wine & Spirit Association, he was offering some forthright views on the Government's excise duty policy. To illustrate what he considers to be the debilitating effect of the policy on the Treasury's coffers, Grant pulled a ten-pound note from one pocket and a lighter from the other. Grant claims to have forgotten that it is illegal to destroy a bank note.



Blushing bride

THE soon to be consummated marriage between Property Week and the Estates Times has not been without a hiccup. When Penny Guest, editor of Property Week, made the announcement to her staff, by way of circular, that the 28-year-old newspaper would be merging with its rival next month, she mistakenly referred to her other half as the Estates Gazette, the glossy "bible" of the property trade, with a slightly longer pedigree than the Estates Times. No more confusion though — the new publication retains the Property Week title.

'Evening all'

LAMBETH council looks likely to be the first local authority to establish an anti-fraud and anti-corruption unit. Heather Rabbatts, the council's chief executive, is keen to build up an anti-fraud culture and is headhunting a manager with proven fraud investigatory background. Potential Poirots can expect a four-year contract and a salary of up to £50,000.

Family man

IAN RUSSELL, Scottish-Power's finance director, is a thoroughly modern man who likes to put his children to bed. Having spent ten full days in London, riding the waves of Southern Water, Russell jumped on a plane last Wednesday evening and headed for Morningside, Edinburgh. He was back on another plane early the next morning, making the return journey south for more business.

MORAG PRESTON

Trials could help 'oppressed' smokers breathe more easily

Ian Brodie reports
on the Chattanooga
campaign to puff
the advantages of a
smokeless cigarette

Diane Prescott and her husband John, a car mechanic, are dedicated cigarette smokers. Between them, they get through more than two packs a day. The habit has been hard on their family. Their teenage daughter's allergies are aggravated by smoke, and Mrs Prescott's mother banned the couple from smoking in her home or at her hairdressing business.

For the past 18 months, though, the Prescotts have been smoking routinely around the mother and daughter and all have been breathing more easily.

The Prescotts were chosen for secret trials in Chattanooga, Tennessee, to help in the development of a smokeless cigarette called Eclipse. They participated in an extraordinary collaboration between two threatened species to find a cleaner smoke. On the one hand were several hundred smokers who felt constantly guilty about the impact of their cigarettes on non-smoking friends and family. On the other was a cigarette firm, RJ Reynolds Tobacco Co., makers of Camel and other brands, that along with the rest of the US tobacco industry has been under the heaviest legal and regulatory assault ever launched by opponents of smoking.

Every two weeks, the Prescotts met other smokers in a group to puff on Eclipse and to suggest improvements. Reynolds executives explained their goals and invited suggestions, treating the smokers as co-developers of the project. Over time, Eclipse showed a marked improvement in smokeability and flavour. "They listened to us," Mr Prescott said.

The novel idea of a manufacturer speaking directly to consumers was so successful that Reynolds will continue the concept as it expands test marketing of Eclipse in the US, Germany and Sweden. Reynolds describes its approach as "dialogue marketing". Smokers are invited to "discovery groups" where they receive a videotape extolling the merits of Eclipse along with a free carton. They are shown how to light the carbon tip that is the cigarette's heat source and how to draw on it, warning rather than burning the tobacco and inhaling a mixture of nicotine and vapour.

Reynolds claims that, in addition to reducing second-hand smoke by nearly 90 per cent, Eclipse leaves no lingering odour, produces virtually no messy ash and causes no staining of curtains and other furnishings. Eclipse is also touted as low in tar and nicotine, within the range of today's ultra-light brands, while still delivering a rich taste.

The Prescotts found the claims to be true. Mr Prescott said: "There is so little smoke that I can light up in the car with the windows shut. I couldn't do that before." The couple resumed smoking at work and were no longer banished to the street. Both said that they suffered less from smokers' cough,



Habit-forming: the anti-smoker crusade has spread around the world. China, which has 300 million smokers, banned smoking in public from May 15

though Reynolds makes no specific health claims for Eclipse.

Wall Street is watching Reynolds's delicate courtship of support for Eclipse with intense curiosity. Sceptics remember the launch of Premier, another smokeless cigarette, which was rushed out prematurely nine years ago to strengthen Reynolds's shares during a takeover fight. Smokers loathed the smell and taste. The carbon tip fell off and the "flavour beads" proved unsatisfactory. Premier vanished quickly, leaving a residue of doubts.

The cautious reintroduction of a smokeless brand at the height of America's cigarette wars has already stirred hostility among anti-smoking groups. Reynolds executives are confident that word-of-mouth among smokers will eventually give them a market share sufficient to justify the untold millions of dollars spent on research

and development. The first hurdle will be the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which is committed to imposing new regulations on tobacco.

Anti-smoking forces are petitioning the FDA to regard Eclipse not as a traditional cigarette, but as a new "nicotine delivery device" that should be treated as a drug, and subject to years of testing. That puts the FDA on a sticky wicket. A ruling against Eclipse would expose the agency to charges of denying smokers and non-smokers the health benefits of reducing second-hand smoke.

Although anti-tobacco scientists are impressed by the smokeless effect, they express concern that Eclipse could increase heart disease by putting more carbon monoxide into smokers' blood than existing light cigarettes. Other tobacco opponents realise that fewer people would die from a less toxic

cigarette, but they worry that many might carry on smoking who would otherwise have been frightened into giving up.

Meanwhile, the agony has been piling up for "Big Tobacco". Whistleblowers within the industry have accused the companies of deliberately controlling nicotine levels to keep smokers addicted, and of concealing what they knew about the dangers of smoking. The tobacco industry is the target of five federal criminal investigations, including possible perjury by the chief executives of cigarette firms who testified on Capitol Hill that nicotine was not addictive.

Most smokers are ensnared by the age of 20 and President Clinton has taken the lead in a popular campaign to combat cigarette sales to under-18s. Police have even used children in sting operations against tobaccoists. But smoking among teenagers continues to rise, up from 27.5 per cent five years ago to 35 per cent now.

On the health front, a government study of blood samples found that second-hand smoke invades the lungs of 88 per cent of non-smokers. The American Medical Association urged all American investors to dump tobacco shares from their portfolios.

Eight states are suing the tobacco industry to recover billions of dollars spent on treating illnesses caused by smoking. Other states may follow suit. Tobacco's invincibility in court was dealt a blow when the Liggett Group, the smallest of America's five major cigarette companies, offered to settle the states' liability claims and a huge class-action lawsuit against tobacco firms on behalf of addicted smokers nationwide.

After all these setbacks, tobacco finally enjoyed an enormous victory. The class-action suit was thrown out by three appeal court judges who refused to commit the fate of entire industry to a single jury. Wall Street cheered. Shares in Philip Morris, the largest cigarette maker, gained \$5.4 billion in value in just over an hour of trading.

Tobacco remains an immensely profitable business. US cigarette sales rose last year for the first time in ten years and huge markets are opening up in Russia, China and elsewhere in Asia. Many brokers believe that the cigarette wars could end in a truce. Philip Morris proposed voluntary curbs on its promotion of cigarettes to teenagers if FDA regulation of the industry was halted forever. Clinton officials said the plan fell short of their goals.

The eventual answer may be somewhat different. Congress could agree to protect tobacco companies from lawsuits by classing them as producers of known dangerous materials. In exchange, the firms would submit to regulation by the FDA, which would have powers to order gradual reductions in tar and nicotine and to impose stringent restrictions on marketing to young people. Thus smoking might slowly decline over the years.

Meanwhile, Reynolds awaits the fate of Eclipse in the marketplace and at the hands of the FDA. If it is blocked or fails to attract sufficient customers, the company will cancel its harm-reduction efforts.

As one executive said: "If we're going down a road where nobody will support us, you reach a point where you can't afford to do that any more."

Dress rehearsal for the blues on Wall Street

The great Wall Street has been so long coming that even the bears are bored. Since Wednesday morning the Dow has fallen, as I write, less than 1 per cent. Hardly more than a twitch, but this twitch is ambiguous so everyone can be nervous according to their own prejudices.

Some alternative readings. Bond market worries: the twitch is because of the hawkish tone by three Federal Reserve governors (Mishkin, Broadbent and Perry) since Tuesday's federal open market committee meeting. Or it is because of the sudden growth of the US monetary base, up 8.2 per cent at an annual rate in the last month, after a long quiescence? Or pure equity considerations: the sharp downward revision of first-quarter growth could arouse second thoughts in investors who have been betting on a boom. Or is it simply that investors have developed vertigo?

The Fed worries really are new, and surely reflect the tone of Tuesday's FOMC meeting. They are not about the usual culprits. Commodity prices are falling, and US investment has been so strong that there is spare plant capacity all over the place. But two traditional Fed worries have reappeared — aggressive bank lending and wages.

You can dress the wage worry up in semi-modern theory and talk about Nairo (the Non-Accelerating Rate of Unemployment), but nobody really knows what this is. It used to be put at about 6.5 per cent, which was passed on the way down ages ago. Anecdote is much likelier. Most FOMC members are presidents of regional Feds, and have their ears close to the ground. Pay attention, then.

The monetary base, by contrast, is a mystery wrapped in an oriental enigma. The US Treasury, in spite of tight fiscal policy, is having to sell a lot of paper because of maturities — a second mop-up of the huge sums pumped into the US banking system in the early 1990s. Until last month it was hidden: the Japanese authorities were converting all the surplus dollars into yen.

buying US Treasury paper so aggressively that the Fed was pushed to prevent interest rates from falling. Now the Japanese seem to have stopped intervening (perhaps the yen is weak enough?) and the Fed is buying Treasury paper simply to stop US rates rising.

Up goes the monetary base, up go bond yields. But though the problem is visible, nobody knows how serious it is. Why, and for how long, will the Japanese stay out of the market? And is the Fed likely to base policy on what Tokyo does? The money numbers, in short, are a mystery.

Markets hate mysteries, but at this stage they are only positively worrying to signed-up monetarists. And the growth revision can be left, I think, to history; that was two months ago, the new chain-weighted numbers always look a bit low, and since then the signs have generally remained pretty strong.

Meanwhile, the astonishing rise and rise of the Dow has not yet carried yields to all-time lows, or p/e's to all-time highs; but those lows and highs were set in genuine booms, not in what remains quite moderate growth, with some soft patches. And US equity market capitalisation as a proportion of GDP, which passed 90 per cent in March, is at an all-time record — higher even than in 1929.

Further, the market seems to notice only good news — always a warning sign. No allowance for over-investment, which has left manufacturing fighting for sales at the expense of margins. And if there really is wage pressure, will that be at the expense of margins, too?

As for verities, consider some of the small capitalisation shares — a good fever indicator. Iomega, a maker of computer disk drives (an ultra-tight market, with a p/e of over 250). Or Prestick, which makes image scanners for just one customer: at a p/e of 670, half again as much as Rhein-Elektron AG, which owns its only customer. Or read all about it in *Grant's Interest Rate Observer*. Anyone for Everest?

Honest debate needed on pay

From Mr Stefan Stern. Sir, The question of pay policies is creeping slowly back on to the agenda, in spite of the unequivocal rejection ("Transport union gives warning to Blair over pay", May 22) voiced by Bill Morris, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, last Tuesday.

Levels of pay have never been far from the headlines — "fat cats" scandals and speculation about a minimum wage have seen to that.

And yet open discussion of the challenges raised by pay issues — the implications of a minimum wage for differentials, the reaction in the public sector after years of restraint, and the breaking of the link between pay and performance at executive level (a different kind of differentials exercise) — is all but absent in the public domain.

Employees, employers and their representatives need to start considering how past mistakes could be avoided in the context of a new government.

The current public sector borrowing requirement overshoot threatens pre-poll tax cuts. May 24 underlines how difficult it will be to hold down public spending.

It is more than 17 years since the 1978-79 5 per cent pay round collapsed, heralding the Winter of Discontent. Now relevant parties seem determined once again to take up opposing positions in public before repeating old mistakes. We need an honest, grown-up debate about pay if a re-run of history is to be averted. Yours faithfully, STEFAN STERN, The Industrial Society, London W1.

CBI policy is made by its members, not by those who advise it

From Robbie Gilbert. Sir, may I reply to Denis MacShane's letter (May 24)? CBI policy is made by its members, not by those who advise it. At the time when I wrote my article, I believe that they had not finalised their view on what line they wished the Government to adopt at the latest inter-governmental conference. I was simply taking the channels open to me to offer my advice.

I am no less convinced that the Government of the need to shift the emphasis of social policy in Europe, which for too long was more effective in placing burdens on the creation of jobs than in helping

Social chapter opt-out 'still appropriate'

From J. Adair Turner. Sir, The Times business section of May 22, carried an article by Robbie Gilbert [the CBI's employment adviser] "Time to rejoin social policy debate". I would like to clarify that the views he expressed were personal.

Pay hypocrisy in the City

From Mr Peter Bottomley, MP. Sir, The new chief executive of a telecommunications business will receive not his predecessor's £400,000 but £650,000, a possible equivalent bonus and £2.6 million share options (Report, May 16). On the same page, is the headline "Pay growth disappoints the City" above a report that average earnings growth in the year to March was 3.75 per cent. Yours faithfully, PETER BOTTOMLEY, House of Commons, SW1.

the 20 million EU citizens unable to find them. But we are not alone in thinking that now. Even the Swedish model is looking rather worn as the costs rise. And at my experience of negotiating on behalf of CBI members with the opt-out in place is that Britain's lack of votes when it comes to the reckoning tends to exasperate those who share our views, while giving comfort to those who don't.

Yours faithfully, ROBBIE GILBERT, Principal Adviser to the CBI on Employment Policy, Policy Mediation, 10 Borough Arcade, 19/20 High Street, Yeovil.

The CBI's policy stance remains that it is appropriate to retain our opt-out from the social chapter. Yours faithfully, J. ADAIR TURNER, Director-General, CBI Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, WC.

Wisdom of hiring older employees

From Mr Glenn Douglas. Sir, A headline (May 14) states that "Business sees the wisdom of age", a view apparently supported by Bill Cockburn, chief executive of WH Smith. Below it is a headline, "Boardroom departure at WH Smith", referring to the departure, after restructuring, of Mr David Roberts, 53, a move apparently supported by Bill Cockburn. Yours faithfully, GLENN DOUGLAS, Flat 1, 10 Lansdowne Crescent, Worcester.

Looking at larger economic picture

From Keith Robinson. Sir, Anatole Kaletsky takes a laudably rational and self-appraising approach today (Economic View, May 23) in his speculative analysis of the balance of economic strengths in Europe, and its influence on the benefits to the UK of EMU, whereby we may stand to achieve "... locking in a permanent competitive advantage over Germany ..." due to its "... relatively weak position".

However, the economic detail he sketches in is surely part of a much larger and lastingly painted picture. This is the one in which the greater part of the British people are still, in fact, Little Englanders, willing to continue carving their niche in the world through limited and traditional European co-operation, while the Germans appear, at least in their leaders' European vision, to have tendencies of domination that we grew out of decades ago.

Given that the rational economic argument is surrounded by these historical inclinations and culture differences, is it not likely to be a very short-term lock-in, and is not the safer scenario for our national sovereignty and dignity likely to be the one which recognises the heavily painted larger picture rather than the pencil sketch we are shown?

Yours, KEITH ROBINSON, The Wilderness, Littlewick Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire.

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PORTFOLIO

LIG profits improve 72% after change in strategy

By CLARE STEWART

LONDON International Group, the surgical gloves and condoms manufacturer, yesterday beat City expectations with a 72 per cent jump in profits.

The increase prompted analysts to upgrade current-year forecasts to about £39 million. Pre-tax profits for the year to March 31 rose to £26.2 million on sales 11 per cent ahead, at £309.6 million.

Stronger sales and the cost benefits arising from the group's restructuring also helped to boost operating margins from 9.3 per cent to 10.1 per cent.

The results further vindicate LIG's back-to-basics strategy, focusing on its core areas of condoms and surgical gloves. A disastrous diversification into photoprocessing led to a £175 million loss in 1994, followed by a rescue rights issue.

Nick Hodges, chief executive, said: "We are pleased with the results, but we are still in a recovery period so cannot afford to be complacent."

We think that going back to our core businesses is going well, but we look forward to doing better."

Condoms remain LIG's largest business, with brand leaders such as Durex contributing to the group's 22 per cent share of the world market for branded condoms.

Sales rose 15.2 per cent to £117 million, helped by increased marketing spend, with the biggest increases seen in southern Europe and North America, both ahead by more than 15 per cent.

In the UK, sales were ahead by 11 per cent. Although last year's warnings over use of certain types of the Pill did not have an immediate impact on sales, LIG expected to see increased demand in the longer term.

Sales of LIG's Biogel surgical glove helped to lift overall sales of surgical gloves by 17.7 per cent to £59.4 million. The group sees further scope for growth through wider marketing of Biogel as well as the introduction of new specialist variations of the product.

While the sale of household gloves, which include the Marigold brand, were up 9 per cent to £45.4 million, sales of own-label products were flat. Industrial glove sales increased by 15.5 per cent to £26.8 million.

After recent expansion, such as its £46 million purchase of Aladan, the US glove and condom manufacturer, Mr Hodges says there is further scope for "infill acquisitions". More disposals are also expected in line with LIG's target of raising £30-50 million. It has so far raised about £23 million.

With a final dividend of 1.5p, LIG is paying a total of 2p for the year. Earnings increased 43 per cent to 5.76p a share, while borrowings have been cut by £17 million to £28 million.

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Legal bill knocks Raglan

By SARAH BAGNALL

RAGLAN Properties saw more than half its profits wiped out last year as a result of a £2.7 million legal dispute with Waitrose, a former tenant.

Waitrose last month won a £2.4 million claim against Raglan over a development sold by Raglan in 1989 but severely damaged by arson two years later. Legal costs took the bill to £2.7 million.

Raglan yesterday said that it is taking legal action against the development's architects, whom it declined to name.

The dispute cut pre-tax profits to £2.4 million in the year to March 31, from £5.6 million, and net asset value to 33.6p a share, from 35.3p.

Raglan has joined with Chelsea Link, a company owned by the Fu family of Hong Kong, to acquire six industrial estates for £21.75 million. The estates, bought from Hermes Property Asset Management, generate annual gross rent of £2.6 million. Raglan is paying £15.7 million in cash and 17.2 million new Raglan shares, which Hermes has agreed to hold for a year.

The dividend, due on August 2, rises from 1p to 1.1p, from earnings per share of 1.22p, down from 3.33p last time. The shares remained 25 1/2p.



In the driving seat: John Clement, chairman, with Peter Wilson, chief executive

Ransomes a cut above

CONTRACTS to supply lawnmowers to the St Andrews and Gleneagles golf courses helped Ransomes to lift pre-tax profits by 34 per cent, to £6.7 million, in the half year to March 30 (Fraser Nelson writes).

The sharp rise saw Ransomes return to the dividend list with an interim payment of 0.5p.

Demand for the new E-Plex

lawnmower, a near-silent model designed for golf course greens, helped sales to grow 10 per cent to £101 million. Orders from golf courses in the Pacific Rim also grew sharply.

John Clement, chairman, said that a late start to the grass-cutting season had hit European sales in April and May, but this would be offset

by orders for recently launched lawnmowers.

The shares fell 1p to 67p, against the January rights issue price of 48p. The rights raised £37.3 million, which was used to reduce debt. Borrowings stand at £34.2 million (£67.3 million). The dividend, due on September 2, is payable out of earnings per share of 3p.

New trust gives funds boost to M&G

By ROBERT MILLER

M&G, Britain's largest independent unit trust group, spent £2 million on marketing to raise about £217 million for its Equity Income Investment Trust launched earlier in the year.

David Morgan, group managing director of M&G, which yesterday announced an 18 per cent rise in half-year, pre-tax profits to £34.4 million, said that more than half of the money raised for the trust was ring-fenced within a personal equity plan.

Helped by the trust block-buster M&G saw funds under management rise to £15.3 billion in the six months to March 31, against £12.2 billion in the same period last year.

The £20 million three-year restructuring of the group's administration department in Chelmsford is expected to be completed by the end of this financial year, Mr Morgan said.

In the latest six-month period, M&G wrote off £3.2 million, against £2.6 million last time. To date, it has spent about £17 million of the planned total of exceptional costs.

The extra costs of meeting the contractual payments to Tony Shearer and Alan Oddie, two former senior officers who were on one-year contracts, and the provision for the executive bonus scheme will be included in M&G's full-year figures.

Commenting on the half-time results, Sir David Money-Coutts, chairman of M&G, said: "Over the six-month period, revenue grew by 14 per cent to £70 million, a record for the group. The increase was mainly in our annual fee revenue and was the result of the rise in the FT-SE all-share index over the period and encouraging sales within both our retail and institutional businesses."

He added: "Demand for our no-initial-charge products remains high and we consequently expect the balance of our revenue to continue to shift in favour of annual fees away from initial charges."

M&G lifted its interim payout 14 per cent to 10p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Royal Bank in £78m Spanish joint venture

ROYAL Bank Development Capital, a subsidiary of Royal Bank of Scotland, and Banco Santander have led the £78 million purchase of three Spanish supermarket chains. The chains are Superdiplo and Hiperica, based in Andalusia, and HDG, in the Canary Islands. Vista Capital de Expansion, a joint venture between Royal Bank and Banco Santander, will appoint and install new management to run the merged operation after the buyout.

The new business will go under the Superdiplo name and plans to make further acquisitions. Joe McGrane, managing director of Royal Bank Development Capital, said: "This deal is a significant first step in the consolidation of the Spanish food retail sector, which, by UK standards, is highly fragmented."

House of Fraser review

JOHN COLEMAN, the new chief executive of House of Fraser, has started an extensive review of the financially stretched retail group. Brian McGowan, chairman, told the company's annual meeting: "John has instigated a full review of the group's operations and policies." He added that there were no easy answers to creating strong, sustained growth and that the current year would be one of consolidation, rather than rapid growth. Mr McGowan said that the current year had "started encouragingly", with a 5.1 per cent rise in like-for-like sales for its first 17 weeks. However, margins are not expected to improve until the second half.

ABI exports improve

INCREASED overseas sales helped ABI Leisure, Europe's third-largest caravan manufacturer, report flat pre-tax profits of £1.8 million in the six months to February 29. The continued growth in export sales, particularly in France and The Netherlands, together with UK leisure home sales, helped to offset the impact of fierce competition in the UK touring caravan market, where overstocking has hit margins. The growth in exports means ABI's profits are weighted more towards the second half. Sales edged ahead £700,000 to £428 million. The interim dividend, due July 5, was held at 1.42p and is payable out of earnings of 3.6p a share (4.2p).

Time Warner sued

BARTHOLDI CABLE and its marketing arm is suing Time Warner Inc and Time Warner's cable operations for violation of antitrust laws and seeking about \$1 billion in relief and damages. The complaint was filed in the US District Court for the Eastern District of New York. Bartholdi, formerly Liberty Cable Co, serves about 30,000 subscribers in New York. The suit alleges Liberty "had the resources to compete and succeed in a fair contest, but the playing field was not level because of numerous clear and persistent violations of the antitrust laws". Time Warner describes the suit as "totally without foundation" and will "vigorously oppose it".

Bett Brothers slips

BETT BROTHERS, the housebuilding, inns and commercial property group based in Scotland, is holding its interim dividend at 1.75p a share after suffering a decline in pre-tax profits to £1.7 million, from £3.01 million, in the half-year to February 29. Earnings per share fell to 8.6p, from 13.44p. The shares fell 9p, to 139p. The company attributed the decline in profits to reduced earnings from housebuilding and the timing of commercial property transactions. Ronnie Hanna, chief executive, said that there are signs of a modest improvement in the market for existing homes.

Coles Myer settles with former finance director

By CLARE STEWART

COLES MYER, Australia's largest retailer, has settled its litigation with Philip Bowman, its former finance director.

The group is to pay Mr Bowman about A\$1.43 million (£712,000), together with a further A\$325,000 to cover legal costs. As part of the settlement, the two parties have agreed to drop all allegations made against each other.

The nine-month dispute has proved costly to Coles Myer, both financially and in terms of the group's reputation. The Melbourne retailer spans a range of outlets, including

supermarkets, Kmart discount stores, Liquorland shops and department stores. Mr Bowman's dispute started three months after he became finance director.

Mr Bowman, a former director of Bass, moved to Australia to join Coles Myer in June 1995. However, his stay was short-lived after he began to ask questions about a share transaction in 1990. Mr Bowman alleged that the transaction had cost the company a substantial amount of money, but had benefited, indirectly, Solomon Lew, the executive chairman. Three months later,

Mr Bowman was dismissed from his job, which carried a total pay package of more than A\$1 million. He responded by suing Coles Myer for wrongful dismissal, seeking A\$2.2 million in damages.

In the wake of the ensuing row over standards of corporate governance at the group, a restructuring programme resulted in the departure of the chairman and the appointment of five new independent directors. The reputation of the retailer was further battered in March, however, when it revealed a 30 per cent drop in half-year profits.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

Charity Commission
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The Charity Commission for England and Wales
The Commission is pleased to announce that it has received a request from the Charity Commission for England and Wales to investigate the affairs of the Charity of St. Mary's, 20 Kings Parade, Queens Dock, Liverpool L3 4DQ. The Commission is pleased to announce that it has received a request from the Charity Commission for England and Wales to investigate the affairs of the Charity of St. Mary's, 20 Kings Parade, Queens Dock, Liverpool L3 4DQ. The Commission is pleased to announce that it has received a request from the Charity Commission for England and Wales to investigate the affairs of the Charity of St. Mary's, 20 Kings Parade, Queens Dock, Liverpool L3 4DQ.

LEGAL NOTICES

ADVERTISING OF MORTGAGES
WORTH LANDLORDS' CONSTRUCTION LIMITED
(Administration)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 25 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Messrs. Moore, Milnes, & Co., 11th Floor, 20 Kings Parade, Queens Dock, Liverpool L3 4DQ, on the 11th day of June 1996 at 11.00 a.m. for the purpose of considering:
(a) My proposals under Section 25(1) of the Insolvency Act 1986;
(b) Establishing a Creditors' Committee.
A creditor is entitled to vote at the meeting only if:
(i) he has forwarded to the Administrator, Messrs. Moore, Milnes, & Co., 11th Floor, 20 Kings Parade, Queens Dock, Liverpool L3 4DQ, a statement in writing of the debt that he claims to be due to him from the above named company, and
(ii) he has duly submitted for the purpose of settlement to vote, and
(iii) There has been lodged with the Administrator, Messrs. Moore, Milnes, & Co., 11th Floor, 20 Kings Parade, Queens Dock, Liverpool L3 4DQ, a statement in writing of the debt that he claims to be due to him from the above named company, and
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A LITTLE CARROT.



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Losses across the board

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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1996 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1995 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1994 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1993 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1992 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1991 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1990 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1989 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1988 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1987 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1986 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1985 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1984 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1983 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1982 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1981 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1980 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1979 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1978 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1977 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1976 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1975 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1974 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1973 Low Company Price % Chg Yld % PE				1972 Low Company 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MUSICALS

The Covent Garden Festival hits its stride with the Thirties pastiche of *Dames at Sea*...



OPERA

...and, from Dublin, a fine production of Handel's early "magic" opera, *Amadigi*

THE TIMES ARTS

DANCE

New York gets a taste of the Mark Morris *Orfeo* that will come to this summer's Edinburgh Festival



TOMORROW

Spend a little time with me: the indefatigable Shirley Bassey opens her Festival Hall residency

MUSICAL THEATRE: Loving tribute to Thirties escapism; *Orfeo* in New York; a fine Irish Handel

Writing 'em like they used to

Dames at Sea Ambassadors

Unashamedly, *Dames at Sea* is aimed at an audience which loved and grew up with the Warner musicals of the 1930s, in which the likes of Ruby Keeler went out an unknown and came back a star. Forget the sweat and grit of *A Chorus Line*. This is the old Broadway dream, served up with some neat lyrics full of the names Cole Porter might have drawn on when working at slightly less than full pressure.

George Halmos and Robin Miller pretend to have written a pastiche and elicit friendly laughs from a wisp of a plot about Ruby, the girl from Utah, who arrives on the Great White Way with nothing but a wide smile, good legs and a pair of little red tap shoes. Joanne Farrell has the first two and makes excellent use of the third within the limits of the tiny Ambassadors stage. She is always going to be the girl most likely to succeed when the leading lady breaks down.

As Mona, the monster sacred destined for the chop, Kim Criswell is in strong, extrovert form and does an excellent impersonation of Ethel Merman. She makes the most of the show's best number, *That Mister Man of Mine*. But pastiche comes close to turning into a fan letter when the Broadway theatre is bulldozed, for reasons none too clear, and the whole show transfers to a battleship. In the good old days of Franklin D. Roosevelt, when Dolores Del Rio and Rudy Vallee ruled the waves, the US Navy was at hand to provide a venue for homecoming musicals. It may be the Hudson River rather than the South Pacific, but it makes for a rousing chorus to bring up the curtain on Act II.

Dick, the composer-sailor always ready with a song-sheet in his belt-bottoms, inspires the transfer. This would have been the Dick Powell role and Jason Gardner plays him with a good deal of toothy charm. The sentimental numbers with Joanne Farrell's Ruby have proper period flavour. If they do not manage to tap their way on and off ship with the aplomb of Gene Kelly and Vera-Ellen in *On The Town*, then who did, or does?

Sara Crowe and Jon Peterson fill the obligatory support roles of the blonde with a wisecrack on her lips who will never get top billing and her devoted admirer. He has a good line in tap and she handles the jokes with aplomb.

John Gardyne's nippy production does its best to conceal the New York supper-club origins of this generally disarming and affectionate piece. There is some blatant padding in the first half, including an unnecessary and poorly staged number, *Singapore Sue*. Halmos and Miller tend to be happier afloat than ashore, paying homage to the old tunesmiths rather than mocking them.

Jim Wise's score is constantly agreeable and well played by an off-stage three-piece band under Christopher Littlewood's direction.

No bevy of Busby Berkeley bathing belles, alas, but it is good to see the Covent Garden Festival, of which *Dames at Sea* is part, branching out into musical byways. For those who prefer the mainstream, *Camelot* is on the way next week.

JOHN HIGGINS



The US Navy to the rescue: *Dames at Sea* harks back to the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt when all the dancing girls loved a sailor and a battleship could be home to a show

Underworld song and dance

It might seem to be a stage partnership made on Parnassus: a production of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* choreographed by Mark Morris, much of whose finest work has been set to Baroque scores, and conducted by Christopher Hogwood, a leading exponent of playing classical music on old instruments. Thus at a stroke two of the piece's principal problems are solved: its relative dearth of dramatic incident (and, of course, its requirement for several ballets) and the colouristic delicacy of the score, which modern taste, paradoxically, almost requires to be performed on old instruments.

Morris's and Hogwood's new production, which recently completed an American tour at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, will be presented at this summer's Edinburgh Festival. It would be hard to imagine a more traditional staging of Gluck's noble, neo-classical vision of triumphant love than this one, from the Doric columns and fluttering

draperies of Adrienne Lobel's lovely set to the little pasty wings on the shoulders of Amor; yet the production throughout was marked by bracing freshness and originality of vision.

Unlike Morris's memorable *Dido and Aeneas*, which was danced straight through, with the singers in the pit, Michael

Orfeo ed Euridice Brooklyn

Chance and Dana Hanchard acted out the title roles just as they must do in an ordinary production. The chorus, in evening dress, was placed on risers on either side of the



Skirting the issue: the Mark Morris Dance Company in the Morris/Hogwood production of *Orfeo ed Euridice*

stage, while the dance company, in Martin Pakledin's exquisite reinterpretations of toga and peplos, alternated between infernal and sylvan reveries.

The choreographer's distinguishing marks were evident throughout: almost any movement performed on the stage might appear to be a quotation from life, but he combines and varies them ingeniously to create a peculiarly elegant formalism, happily suited to this score. The writhing of the furies and ghosts in the underworld, cleverly lit so as to throw grotesque shadows on the undulating draperies, and the spontaneous camaraderie of the frolicking finale were particularly evocative.

Morris also handled the vocal soloists with becoming, straightforward refinement: the long third-act duet between the lovers was staged as a stately minuet. The action was never dull; I was especially enchanted by the playfulness of Amor (Christine Brandes), who gambolled and

lollled about with the insouciance of a cherub by Correggio.

The Handel & Haydn Society played with more style than polish: despite some occasional blowniness in the brass and imperfect string intonation, the musicians propelled song and dance with graceful conviction. Chance was a bit muffled in his lower register at first, but he soon dominated the stage with a robust vocal performance. Hanchard has a beautiful voice with a dark timbre, intensified by a tight vibrato, which produces a sound remarkably similar to Chance's. When the two sang in unison, there was at moments an eerie sonic sameness — but that may not be altogether unsuitable for Gluck's victorious lovers.

JAMIE JAMES

Wild echoes flying

Vignoles et al
Assembly Rooms,
Bath

THE chances were that, by their fourth concert in the Assembly Rooms in five days, the Bath Festival's Artists in Residence would have worked out how to deal with the acoustic. But after the uncomfortable experience of the third of those concerts, I took no chances: the live broadcast on Radio 3 was a better bet. Either way, the programmes designed by the pianist Roger Vignoles to illuminate the festival theme of "migrations" were unmissable.

The acoustic difficulties at the Assembly Rooms had never before seemed so acute as they were when Vignoles presided over a concert of music inspired by the gypsy influence. When Louise Winter was singing Gypsy Songs by Brahms and Dvorák, the problems of integration were not so serious. In the instrumental duos, on the other hand — Ralph Kirshbaum playing Janáček's *Pohádka* and Dmitry Sitkovetsky playing Ravel's *Tzigane* — the problems were insuperable.

In the matching concert of music with a Jewish theme, considerations of balance were, with help from the BBC engineers, far less distracting. Indeed, one had time to wonder what was Jewish about Brahms's Piano Quintet in F minor and to reflect that however good the pianist — Barry Douglas on this occasion — "artists in residence" do not make a chamber ensemble adequate for such a work as this. However, there was a revelatory interpretation by Philip Dukes and Roger Vignoles of Bloch's Suite for Viola and Piano.

The occasion was notable, too, for the European debut of the American soprano Tiffany Jackson, whose voluptuous sound was imaginatively deployed in Milhaud and Ravel.

GERALD LARNER

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Small, but perfectly informed

This is the Opera Theatre Company of Dublin's third visit to the Covent Garden Festival with Handel, and once more the occasion for sold-out houses. They should become annual events — after all, Handel composed enough operas to last well into the next millennium.

The company's success is based as much as anything on Séamus Creagh's musical

direction. His tempos seem perfectly judged, both in themselves and in relation to each other; he shapes the dramatic action cogently, even given some cuts (regrettably in so comparatively short a Handel opera, but forgivable); the vocal decorations he devises are showy but idiomatic — apart, on Wednesday, from one bizarre excursion into the world of *Lucia di Lammer-*

Amadigi St Clement Danes

moor — and the playing he draws from the London Baroque Sinfonia is invigorating, clear and breezy.

Amadigi is an early (1715) "magic" opera, in some measure an attempt to repeat the phenomenal success, four

years previously of *Rinaldo*, the first piece Handel wrote for London. There is a love-lorn sorceress, Melissa, who gets no change whatsoever from the fine upstanding hero of the title, but makes life hell for his true love Oriana and exploits his best friend Dardano's passion for the lady as well.

The arias for the lovers are mostly out of the top drawer but, like Schiller, Handel loved bold, determined women who don't play by the rules, and he lavished music of great variety on Melissa, from defiance with trumpets to buoyancy, if temporary, 3/4 triumph and a suicide scene with extraordinary sensitivity. Majella Cullagh's big, warmly coloured soprano sounded just right for the role, and she showed a fearlessness of execution to match that of the character.

The counter-tenor Jonathan Peter Kenny was in good form as Amadigi, and once past some early problems with pitch Anne O'Byrne made a nice, true Oriana. Dardano gets just about the loveliest aria in the opera, a lament with bassoon and oboe obbligato of piercing beauty, well sung by the bronze-toned Buddug Verona James.

Of course there is humour in the work to temper the heroics, but some may find the director James Conway's approach too broad, and you need extremely experienced performers to carry off his near-Wildean ironic treatment of the action — only Cullagh came near it.

But the performance is bursting with life, and those unable to squeeze into the repeats tonight and tomorrow should know that *Amadigi* visits the Buxton Festival in July.

RODNEY MILNES

Richard Cork continues his guide to highlights of the current exhibition at the National Gallery

As he grew older, Degas painted less and less. Pastel became his favourite medium, but the oil paintings he did produce in old age are among his most powerful, none more than this extraordinary canvas.

Restricted in colour, so that the bath seems flattened against the wall beyond, it is nevertheless a sumptuous image.

The water in the tub appears to suffuse the room with warmth, and even the large towel has lost the cool, bright whiteness it possesses in other pictures from the same series.

Leaning against it, the bather seems strangely elongated as she rubs the side of her body. Degas wanted to accentuate the sense of a body unfolding as it relaxes after a bath.

Certainly the woman's flesh is painted in an unusually simple way. Compared with the pastels, where the bathers' bodies are often scored with harsh lines, this figure could hardly be more smooth.

But there is a sense of



"An extraordinary canvas". After the bath: woman drying herself, c.1894-6. Philadelphia Museum of Art

unease in this picture as well as pleasure. The gap separating the woman from the bath seems to emphasise her isolation. Moreover, she tilts her head at an awkward angle. The bather looks very alone, and the defencelessness of her exposed, dramatically lit flank hints at a feeling of vulnerability.

• Degas: Beyond Impressionism is at the National Gallery until Aug 26 (tickets from First Call, 071-420 0000)

• On Monday, Richard Cork continues his series with a discussion of *Woman at her toilette* (c.1900-05), while on Tuesday he will review the major exhibition of work by the Swiss sculptor Alberto Giacometti at the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, in Edinburgh

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POP 2

A small output but perfectly formed: Blue Nile on the long search for *Peace at Last*



POP 3

Going a bit soft? The latest album from Metallica shows disturbing signs of mellowness

THE ARTS



POP 4

Garage-band thrills with a Welsh accent: 60ft Dolls deliver a predictable but punchy debut disc



POP 5

... while the Aloof live up to their name with a stark and mysterious second album

Not enough riff with the smooth

NEW ALBUMS: If this Metallica were lumberjacks, they'd be the ones who like to press wild flowers

METALLICA

Load (Vertigo/Mercury 532 618)
AS heavy metal overloads of the 1980s, Metallica perpetrated crimes against the hearing of a generation with a wanton genius that was impervious to outside critique. Like the Allen in the first of the Sigourney Weaver movies, the band was a lifetime that functioned with malevolent perfection, however much those assigned to bury it might have wished otherwise.

But it is now five years since the group's crowning glory, the 14-million-selling, megaton-riffing *Metallica* (the so-called Black Album), and they have softened perceptibly. The jerking, bluesy riff of *Ain't My Bitch*, which opens their new album, sounds like Robert Palmer doing one of his T. Rex impressions; the sweeping chorus of *Ronnie* would not be out of place on a Bon Jovi album; and there is even an acoustic guitar ballad, called *Mama Said*, with subtle touches of pedal steel.

It is not all like that, of course. The rolling, tomtom-driven riff of *Thorn Within* and the aggressively grinding boogie rhythm of *2 X 4* hit the rock like Thor's hammer. And singer James Hetfield vents his spleen with a familiar roar on *Wasting My Hate*, a portrait of himself as Mr Angry that verges on caricature.

Sometimes it works, as on the single *Until It Sleeps*, a sensational pop-rock song by any standard. But too often the hard thinking gets in the way of the hard rocking, and when they attempt to paste a presumably ironic lyric over a pseudo-funk beat on *Poor Twisted*

Me, they are in danger of losing the plot altogether.

THE ALOOF

Sinking (East West 0630-4584)
ONE OF many acts now chipping away at the interface between dance music and experimental rock, the Aloof is a four-piece from London that numbers among its ranks DJ Jazzy Jay, Kooner and keyboard player Gary Burns, both formerly of Sabres Of Paradise, and DJ/producer Dean Thatcher of Red Snapper.

Sinking, their second album, is a stark and mysterious cocktail of gliding synthesizer sounds, languid dub effects and furiously shuffling percussion loops, with the ultra-compressed jazz vocals of Ricky Barrow periodically bobbing up like the umbrella on top.

Although the album is essentially a tour of alternative realities, influenced by drowsy trip hop, there is a surprisingly forceful quality to numbers such as *Abuse*, with its sinister, helicopter-blade rhythm, and the industrial-strength beats of *One Night Stand*.

60FT DOLLS

The Big 3 (Indolent DOLLS004)

THE latest in a recent string of Welsh exports, 60ft Dolls from Newport have successfully located the original garage-band thrill and deliver a punchy, if predictable, rock'n'roll broadside on their debut album.

A man who wears his influences on his sleeve, singer Richard Parfitt has one of those classic breathless British voices — somewhere between Ian Hunter and Joe Strummer — which

he applies with a gung-ho spirit to numbers that shoot past like trees outside a train window.

The slowish finale of *Buzz* and a drugs-can-do-you-in number called *Streamlined* are the nearest they get to a ballad, but more typical is the happy-go-lucky blast of *New Loafers* ("Sitting on a sofa, waiting for my chauffeur"), the hot-wired Paul Westerberg-style rocker *The One* and a brilliant, punked-up take on Tom Petty's rootsy bar-band sound, called *Good Times*.

DAVE GRANEY 'N' THE CORAL SNAKES

Night of the Wolverine (This Way Up/Island 532 129)

ALTHOUGH currently on heavy rotation on the London pub circuit, Dave Graneley is said to be a star of some substance in his native Australia, where *Night of the Wolverine* was released three years ago.

As a singer he marries the stylistic traits of Nick Cave and Lou Reed without achieving the low-register gravitas of either. But as a combination of showman, storyteller and hustler, he scores with literate, oddball narratives that are perfectly framed by the wide-screen, acoustic rock'n'roll of the Coral Snakes.

SINGLE

REBECCA TÖRNQVIST

Good Thing (EMI 8 65242)

THIS first single released in Britain by Swedish singer and songwriter Rebecca Törnqvist, *Good Thing* is a jaunty tune, nudged along by a sunny slide guitar. If anything, it recalls the early work of Tania Tikanan.

However, her impressive treatments of Alec Wilder's *Pil Walk* and the Burke/Van Heusen standard *Here's that Rainy Day* underline her serious jazz credentials.

A sophisticated talent with a light, populist touch, Törnqvist could turn out to be a very good thing indeed.

DAVID SINCLAIR



"Really good things come along only when they're ready to — you can't hurry them up," says Paul Buchanan, patient leader of the Blue Nile

Take your time, think a lot

Three albums in a dozen years is hardly prolific, but that's the way things are with the ever-lovely Blue Nile. Alan Jackson reports

One question wearies Paul Buchanan more than any other. Inevitably it is that which he is most often asked, but only by those not already enraptured by the music of his band, the Blue Nile: why does it take so long to come up with each new album? "I think people get it the wrong way round," he says of the popular expectation that artists should be not only gifted, but also effortlessly, extravagantly prolific. "What I would want to ask is, why don't more people wait until they can put out good records?"

This is not the self-gratifying response it might seem: like his partners Robert Bell and Paul Joseph Moore, Buchanan is too well-mannered ever to think of blowing his own trumpet. But he has a point. And those who love the group are grateful for this commitment to quality, not quantity.

Having met as students at their home-town university, the three Glaswegians released their first LP, *A Walk Across the Rooftops*, to critical acclaim in 1984. But long before 1989, when his equally lauded successor, *Hats*, appeared, a cartoon-like image had been bestowed upon them by the wider music industry — that of reclusive perfectionists, toiling obsessively. Allowing nearly seven years to elapse

before presenting a follow-up, *Peace at Last*, has only served to confirm this caricature, of course. "I know, I know," Buchanan says. "But take latter-period Bob Dylan or Stevie Wonder or Paul McCartney... wouldn't you say there's sometimes a strong case for putting out less material, not more?"

The growing number of famous names to have sought him out in the interim might choose to disagree. Peers as diverse as Robbie Robertson, Michael McDonald and Julian Lennon have benefited recently from his collaborative influence on their own songwriting, while Annie Lennox, Rickie Lee Jones, Rod Stewart and even Isaac Hayes covered material from *Hats*.

All this has been more than enough to guarantee him cult status as a writer, if not as a performer. Meanwhile a relationship, since ended, with the actress Rosanna Arquette gave the self-effacing Buchanan a vicarious experience of what full-scale celebrityhood might be like. "I found that I enjoyed the contrast of being

photographed at an awards ceremony one day, then being ignored by the waitress in some greasy spoon the next. It's all just a chance to absorb detail."

On stepping out of the reflected spotlight, it took an itinerant progress through rehearsal spaces or studios in Copenhagen, Venice, Paris, Dublin and finally Los Angeles before Buchanan and Co could call *Peace at Last* complete. "Really good things come along only when they're ready to — you can't hurry them up," he says. "And why settle for making something that has no worth? There are enough plastic key-rings out there in the universe — generations from now, they'll still be struggling to get rid of all the free gifts we give out at service stations. You have to aim for something more than just their musical equivalent."

The album has been greeted with great excitement by Warner Bros executives. "Of course it's intense, moving and deeply beautiful," the thinking seems to run. "After all, it's a Blue Nile record." This time, though, it

is subtly different, accessible enough to sell a great many copies. "All in all, almost the perfect set-up for a disappointment," the singer-writer says.

Literally, the ten tracks return again and again to what Buchanan judges the important things in life: family, friends, youth, hope, some sex, a little religion, your favourite music. Among such references, only the religious ones could be said to represent a potential surprise to anyone familiar with his songwriting to date. They surface most strongly on the album's centrepiece, *Family Life*, and beg a question: Buchanan was raised a Catholic, but does he still consider himself one?

The answer is predated by a mock-furtive look, and a message whispered into my tape machine: "Don't listen, Mum." "I wish I was still a real Catholic," he continues, more loudly.

"Instead I'm a sort-of-one, spectacularly so in times of crisis, and the mythology retains a strong pull on me." Buchanan smiles self-consciously, and says he feels uncomfortable at expressing his opinions on such fundamental issues. "Is there a God? How would I know? It would be really good if there was. For me, I can't quite stop believing. Not yet."

● *Peace at Last* is released on June 10 by Warner Bros

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 Older... George Michael (Virgin)
- 2 Jagged Little Pill... Alanis Morissette (Maverick)
- 3 Everything Must Go... Manic Street Preachers (Epic)
- 4 (What's the Story) Morning Glory?... Oasis (Creation)
- 5 1977... Ash (Infectious)
- 6 The Score... Fugees (Columbia)
- 7 Greatest Hits... Take That (RCA)
- 8 Falling Into You... Celine Dion (Epic)
- 9 Moseley Shoals... Ocean Colour Scene (MCA)
- 10 HRs... Mike & the Mechanics (Virgin)

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His selection includes more than a parade of greatest hits. *That Old Black Magic* receives a brisk airing, but Sharon passes over, say, *Blues in the Night* in favour of *Right as the Rain*. While he takes some justifiable harmonic liberties with the material, his prime asset is surely his unerring rhythmic inventiveness, propelled by the exquisite brushwork of Clayton Cameron.

Sharon seldom feels the urge to push a treatment beyond three or four minutes. This minimalist approach may lack the intellectual pretensions of Keith Jarrett's Standards Trio — the biggest name in this particular field — but its zest and plain-speaking make for a far more stimulating ride.

DAVID NEWTON

12th of the 12th: A Jazz Portrait of Frank Sinatra (Candid CACD 79728)

DAVID NEWTON's title is a reference to Frank Sinatra's birthday: without the counterweight of a rhythm section, his interpretations are no less elliptical. Overextended in places, the arrangements are nevertheless graced by Newton's sensitivity of touch. It takes courage, too, to drape *The Lady is a Tramp* in a multicoloured calypso costume.

CLIVE DAVIS

HMV folk selection June



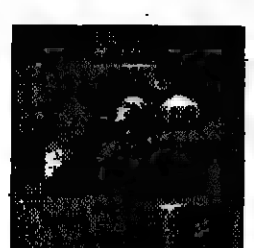
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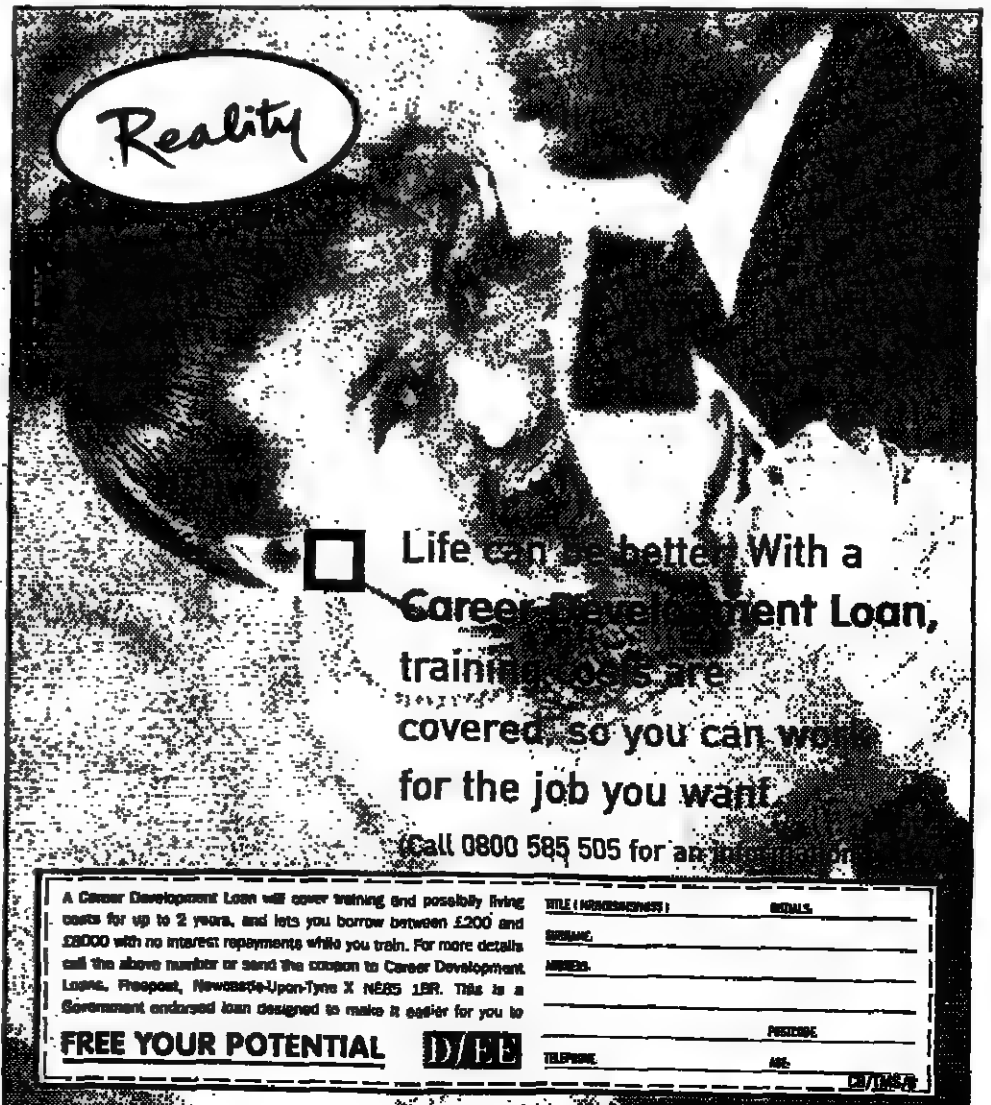
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EDUCATION

The battle for literacy

Michael Barber
on what Britain
must do to get
children reading
and reap the
economic reward

Evidence published earlier this week shows that Britain is slipping further down the competitiveness league table. At nineteenth, we are in grave danger of being relegated from the economic premier league. Chile and Taiwan are two of the countries ahead of us.

Raising educational standards is essential if our downward slide is not to continue. Educational progress on its own will not be enough, but without it our economic problems will certainly worsen.

The Government's reforms of the past decade have been controversial but few now doubt that at their core were some good ideas. A national curriculum, nationally assessed, has helped to establish higher expectations and a common language in which to debate standards. Delegating educational funding to schools has given them greater freedom to operate effectively, and regular school inspections have been beneficial.

The evidence suggests that educational standards have risen substantially in the past decade, certainly in GCSE and A-level examinations, and in participation rates post-16 and post-18. So it is tempting to conclude that if the reforms were simply allowed to "bed down", all would be well and Britain would catch up with its competitors.

Tempting but disastrous. Although standards have risen, they remain far below those of many other countries. Worse still, the bedrock of future educational success — the standard of literacy at the end of primary schooling — is not firmly in place.

Although aspects of the recent Ofsted report on reading were contested, no one disputes its conclusion that "four



Testing time: the early acquisition of reading skills is absolutely vital for educational — and national — progress

out of ten pupils in year six achieved reading ages which were two or more years below their chronological age. Many of these 11-year-old pupils achieved a reading age of about eight."

While the three deprived boroughs in the survey are not typical of the whole country, its results reveal very serious literacy problems in Britain's metropolitan areas — and underperformance in literacy at 11 has dire consequences.

Secondary schools are often not equipped to ameliorate or rectify it and, if they are, it is expensive. Poor literacy is also associated with poor standards of behaviour, especially among boys. Worse still, we know from research that pupils who leave primary school as low achievers are also likely to be low achievers at 16.

Any realistic hope of raising educational standards substantially in the long term depends upon an urgent, concerted effort to boost reading standards in primary schools.

The Government has taken some positive steps on reading during the past five years. It

funded the Reading Recovery Programme for three years, only to withdraw funding as evidence of its success emerged. This year it announced the establishment of national literacy centres, of which much is rightly expected. Overall, though, the area has suffered from too many disconnected initiatives and an absence of strategic thinking. For example, although one chief aim of the national curriculum was to raise standards in the "three Rs", the evidence suggests that because it was so overloaded in its first few years, it actually reduced the amount of time devoted to reading.

The problem is exacerbated by the extent of conflict over reform, and by the nature of the public debate. This has created a climate in which no one seems willing to take any responsibility for failure. The Government blames teachers without accepting its own responsibility for strategy and teacher retraining. Teachers react defensively to criticism,

and their leaders point to underfunding or class sizes as the cause of the problem. Yet the public would surely welcome an admission from the profession that in this overwhelmingly important aspect of education, teachers have not got it right and need to think again.

The media portray this dispute but rarely seem to reflect on the role they might play — through children's television programming, for example — in addressing the problem. Meanwhile, parents sit bewildered on the sidelines of an unedifying row.

The Government's announcement that inspectors would have greater powers to test children and inspect teacher training may or may not help. Either way, it cannot conceivably be an adequate response to the problem.

There are, in my view, two preconditions for any effective solution. First, every party involved — government, teachers, parents and the media — needs to be less quick to blame others and more willing to take responsibility

for the part it can play in improving reading standards.

Secondly, our approach to the problem needs to be consistent, steady, and strategic over a minimum of five years. A random sequence of one-off initiatives in response to "shock-horror" headlines will not work.

On the other hand, if government has the courage to set an ambitious target — that every 11-year-old should read at their chronological reading age or better by early in the next century — and enlists the support of others in consistent, single-minded pursuit of that goal, a real leap in reading standards is achievable. This demands, of course, a change of climate and a new attitude of critical self-reflection. The literacy task force which David Blunkett, the Shadow Education and Employment Secretary, announced this week intends to make this possible.

● The author is Professor of Education at the Institute of Education, London University, and will chair the literacy task force announced by David Blunkett.

Jenny Knight on a girl's fight with her local authority

When should the deaf be heard?

Laurie McGarry passed the stiff entrance exams to win a place at the Mary Hare Grammar School for the deaf, but if Hampshire County Council has its way she will attend the local comprehensive.

Janet and Tom McGarry, her parents, are awaiting the results of an appeal to a special needs tribunal challenging the council's decision to send the 11-year-old to Cove Comprehensive in her home town of Farnborough, instead of the specialist boarding school in Newbury, Berkshire.

The issue is not just about whether Laurie — who has a severe hearing loss — will get most A levels, but whether she would be better off in a deaf community rather than trying to fit into mainstream society.

Mrs McGarry, who is also deaf and was educated at a mainstream school, said: "We want Laurie to be happy and not struggle to be a hearing person, which is something she can never be. I was always last to understand whatever was happening at school."

"Our deaf friends who went to deaf schools are confident and stable while those who went to mainstream schools say they suffered all sorts of trauma," Mr McGarry said. "We asked the local education authority to provide us with evidence showing how deaf children at mainstream schools turn out. They never provided it."

"Laurie has been very successful at primary school but at secondary level, education speeds up. We fear she will be discriminated against at the comprehensive. She will never be given the main part in a school play and won't be able to take a proper part in classroom discussions."

Hampshire County Council says Cove Comprehensive offers special provision for hearing impaired children, covering the whole curricu-



Appeal: Janet McGarry and her daughter Laurie

lum using amplification, acoustically treated rooms, sub-titled videos, specialist support from speech and language tutors as well as teaching assistants who help with note-taking while the deaf child is lip-reading.

Fears that life will be harder for Laurie at a comprehensive are borne out by a small but disturbing study by Dr Peter Hindley, a child psychiatrist. He found that London children attending deaf units at comprehensive schools had almost twice the rates of psychiatric disorders compared with children at a deaf school. Dr Hindley concluded that a possible explanation was that the deaf school's environment promoted psychological wellbeing more effectively than partial hearing units.

He said: "The deaf school was small. The partially hearing units (PHUs) were all attached to large comprehensive schools. The deaf school offered its pupils a relatively homogeneous peer group, with deaf members of staff and a positive identification with deaf culture through the use of sign language."

"The pupils at PHUs were a minority group in a large group of children without

bearing impairments. While teasing and bullying by peers did take place in the deaf school, it did not occur in relation to the children's deafness. In contrast many of the children at PHUs described bullying by hearing peers, centring on the child's deafness."

A study in America showed that more than half of a group of high school students had difficulty making hearing friends and only a tiny minority had any contact with hearing peers outside school.

Mr McGarry said: "We had a fair hearing at the tribunal and will probably have to accept the decision. They asked Laurie questions and could see that she couldn't understand what was going on without the help of an interpreter."

"If Laurie goes to the comprehensive I will try to arrange a bi-weekly review with the school so we are aware of any problems. Laurie goes on holiday with other deaf children and comes back on a high. I am convinced her confidence would be much greater if she went to the Mary Hare."

A headmaster is to swap a comprehensive for St Helena, Peter Foster reports

In Napoleon's footsteps

A headmaster has decided to trade the rigours of a busy comprehensive to tend to the educational needs of a far-flung outpost of the British Empire. John Price,

56, will go into self-imposed exile on the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic when he becomes the island's chief education officer later this month. For the next two years

he will oversee the development of the island's ten schools with its 1,400 pupils as well as having responsibility for the public libraries.

Mr Price, headmaster at St John's School, Marlborough, for the past 14 years said he had not been looking for a job when he saw the position advertised in *The Times Educational Supplement*. "I felt I probably had five more years in education and thought this job would make a definite change and be interesting and challenging so I applied," he said.

The island, more than 1,100 miles off the coast of Africa, makes contact with the outside world mainly through a Royal Mail ship which arrives every six to eight weeks.

Mr Price and Angela, his wife, will fly with the RAF to Ascension, an island some 700 miles northwest of St Helena, before spending two and a half days sailing to their final destination.

An amateur biologist, Mr Price says he will have little problem keeping himself occupied on a lump of volcanic rock ten miles long and six miles wide: "I have a special interest in the flora and fauna of isolated islands and shall be following some eminent scientists. Charles Darwin stopped at the island while on the so-called Beagle voyage out of which came *On the Origin of Species*. St Helena has an exciting range of endemic plant species which should keep me occupied. The rest of the time I shall spend walking on the coast and enjoying the view."

One of the best views on the island will be from the Prices' new house, a converted officers' mess which looks straight out to sea from cliffs 700ft above Jamestown, the island's capital. "I look forward to watching the RMS

Helena sailing away as I muse on my last contact with the outside world until the mail arrives in six weeks' time," Mr Price added.

He will commute to his office in the centre of Jamestown down the 699 steps of Jacob's Ladder. The stairway, which rises at an angle of 39 degrees, is cut into the mountainside. If Mr Price cannot face the walk back up, he can take his Peugeot which he has had shipped over specially.



Moving: John Price and wife Angela

Asked how his friends reacted to his plan, Mr Price said some thought him brave, others a little mad but most were envious of the point of inquiring whether St Helena might need any other experienced professionals.

Mr Price confessed that he would miss some of the comforts and conveniences of life in Britain but was confident he could live without McDonald's and the English weather. "I shall miss the chance to go to the opera or cinema and going into a good bookshop and browsing through the latest publications. On St Helena I shall be reading reviews of books that won't reach the island for weeks to come."

But unlike the exiled Napoleon, who died on St Helena in 1821, Mr Price will be able to return to his homeland when his contract expires.

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From Hounslow Heath to hub of the world



Left: Sir John Egan, chairman of BAA (second right) and Mike Roberts, managing director of Heathrow, show the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh a model of the proposed Terminal 5. Right: the first "terminal" at Heathrow 50 years ago



On June 6, 1944, as 130,000 Allied troops were storming the Normandy beaches, a few dozen navvies began digging on Hounslow Heath to lay the foundations for two strips of concrete which are now Britain's main gateway to the world.

Hounslow Heath — a flat layer of gravel deposited 25 million years ago — is 14 miles to the west of London. It had been used as a Royal Flying Corps training aerodrome during the First World War but had had to take a back seat to Croydon, which was developed as the capital's main airport in the 1920s.

Fairey Aviation continued to use what it called the Great West Aerodrome to test its aircraft, enabling some far-sighted aviators and politicians serving on Lord Beaverbrook's War Cabinet Committee on Civil Air Transport to suggest its development as a main terminal airport.

Using wartime emergency powers, the Air Ministry bought 2,800 acres of land on Hounslow Heath and drew up plans to develop it in a Star of David pattern to allow aircraft to take off in any direction.

After the war it was transferred to civilian control. On May 28, 1946, a BOAC Avro-Lancaster took off with six passengers — each with an armchair, a window and a table — bound for Sydney, Australia. Three days later, London Airport-Heath Row was formally opened.

To cope with the demand from passengers from airlines such as Pan Am and American Overseas Airways, which now began using the airport on a regular

Harvey Elliott on Heathrow's fiftieth anniversary

basis, a tent village was erected, furnished with armchairs, a bar, a Cable and Wireless Desk and Elsan toilets. Fire buckets were used to catch the rain and duckboards protected passengers from the thick oozing mud.

Within its first year it had handled 60,000 passengers, 2,400 tons of cargo and more than 8,000 flights. Compare this with the 54 million passengers who will pass through Heathrow on 1,100 flights a day heading for 213 destinations in 85 countries this year, and the one million tons of cargo a year worth more than £40 billion which the airport handles.

Today Heathrow is the size of Hereford, with the jobs of 54,000 people depending on the airport directly and a further 26,000 in the surrounding area. The wages paid to these employees alone are worth more than £3 billion a year.

Although some American airports are bigger than Heathrow, it handles more international passengers than any other in the world. Because it has so many flights to so many places it has developed into the world's leading connecting "hub", with passengers from Africa flying in to change planes for the Far East and travellers arriving from America catch flights to the Continent.

The basic facts and figures surrounding Heathrow are mind-numbing. There are 35 flights a day to Paris, 22 to New York. On June 30 last year the airport handled 194,500 passengers. Last year it handled 57 million items of baggage.

BAA is also spending £1 million every day improving the airport still further. But there are real concerns about the future. It is now impossible for any new airlines to start operating from Heathrow, and even existing carriers do not have the take-off and landing slots available to expand further.

Giant aircraft capable of carrying up to 800 people are about to be produced and there is a rapid growth in the use of larger aircraft. The increased numbers of passengers have to go somewhere, hence the proposal to build a fifth terminal.

The public inquiry has lasted for more than a year, and is certain to last at least another. Opponents of the scheme are determined to make it difficult, if not impossible, to open the terminal — even if it is finally approved — in 2003 as is now planned.

And by then Heathrow will be bursting at the seams. Already big airlines are looking at airports on the European mainland which they could develop into a "hub" for their long-haul services, relegating Heathrow to no more than a regional feeder airport.

Without the planned expansion, say those who own and use Heathrow, it will not go on growing very far into its second half-century.

BAA's battle with Swissair to buy the Alders duty-free shops at Heathrow and other airports is a clear sign of how important retailing is for the airport operator. Retail revenue for BAA at its seven UK airports is its largest source of finance, bringing in £514 million in 1994-95. This represents 44 per cent of its earnings.

Alders, which rents its retail shops from BAA, would add significantly to this if BAA takes control of the stores.

BAA says its earnings from retailing enable it to invest more than £1 million a day across the group to develop and improve its services. More importantly, retail revenue makes it possible for Heathrow to keep down its landing charges.

Passengers might be forgiven for wondering if Heathrow's expansion to become one of the largest shopping malls in the South East detracts from its prime function: to be a place from which to fly. Some airline chiefs, for example, have voiced concern that travellers can cause delays because they are too engrossed in shopping to take notice of departure announcements.

BAA's research shows that shopping is high on the list of passengers' priorities and can be a factor in choosing which airport to fly from. Barry Gibson, group retail director

Shopping provides the funds for expansion, reports David Churchill

for BAA, says: "We are not a monopoly. Passengers can buy duty-free goods, for example, on the plane on the way out or coming back and they also have the option of shopping in their departure airport at the other end as well."

British Airways plans to increase its retail revenue by offering in-flight catalogues for goods to be ordered and dispatched later.

Underpinning Heathrow's retail strategy since the early 1990s has been an element of competition, bringing in a wider variety of competing retailers in each of the four terminals. There are now more than 30 retail operations at the airport, ranging from fashion retailers such as Austin Reed and Aquascutum, designer boutiques like Gucci and Ferragamo, and gift shops including Chinacraft and the Disney store.

Given Heathrow's passenger profile — with 55 per cent of its passengers in the AB socio-economic category and a further third in the C1 group — it is not surprising that most stores are upmarket specialist retailers. The Mappin & Webb shop in Terminal 4, for example, is reportedly the biggest selling outlet for Rolex watches in the UK. A bottle of Scotch whisky, moreover, is sold every seven seconds the airport is open. Johnny Walker Red Label is the top brand, while Chanel No 5 is the most popular fragrance.

Unlike most British high streets, Heathrow's shopping is targeted towards overseas residents — nearly half those using the airport are of foreign nationalities. Hence they tend to buy larger items, such as electrical goods, which are often substantially cheaper than in their own countries. Scandinavians also buy spirits because the tax and duty at home makes them expensive. Heathrow, like all BAA

airports, operates a scheme guaranteeing prices no higher than those found in the high street and often significantly less because many items are tax-free. BAA also offers a guarantee promising a full refund to anywhere in the world if a passenger is unhappy, for whatever reason, with a product bought at the airport.

For the future, Terminal 5, if it gets the go-ahead, will provide the first opportunity for BAA to design a terminal with shopping at its heart. Although no shops have been earmarked for the terminal — BAA is anxious not to take its go-ahead for granted — it will inevitably include a WH Smith. After all, Smith's was the first shop opened at Heathrow 50 years ago, and the need for something to read on a journey still holds today.

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Arthur Reed on the milestones in aviation

Slow bombers to supersonic jets

The pioneering passengers who used Heathrow's tented air terminal in 1946 had the choice of 18 air routes, and were flown in slow and noisy aircraft, many of them hasty conversions from wartime bombers and transports.

By the close of that first year, the handful of airlines operating from the new airport had made more than 8,000 flights, with each airliner carrying an average of 6.5 passengers. Today, the contrast could hardly be more remarkable. It is a graphic reflection of the galloping pace of civil aviation.

Heathrow now has 1,100 flights each day, by 93 airlines to 213 destinations in 85 countries. While the average number on board each airliner is 130, Boeing 747 jumbo jets routinely take off with as many as 420 passengers.

After Heathrow's progress from its take-off in 1946, the next significant step came in May 1952, when the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), a forerunner of British Airways, flew the world's first scheduled service with a jet-powered airliner, the de Havilland Comet, to Johannesburg.

By the late 1950s jets were

taking over from the propeller-powered aircraft. The jet-powered Boeing 707s and Douglas DC8s, flying at 450mph, more than halved what had been a bumpy 17-hour marathon, with refuelling stops at Shannon and Gander on the way.

Heathrow saw its first scheduled 747 jumbo service in January 1970, when Pan American used one of the new wide-body jets on the New York run, and in September that same year the first supersonic Concorde landed — on an unscheduled diversion from Farnborough. A British Airways Concorde opened the first scheduled supersonic service out of the airport in January 1976 with a flight to Bahrain, which touched 1,350mph when cruising at 55,000ft down the Adriatic and across the eastern Mediterranean.

The liberalisation of civil aviation by the European Union has resulted in a rash of start-up airlines, and many of these are knocking on the Heathrow door for admission. On busy days in the summer season, Heathrow already handles as many as 90 take-offs and landings in an hour.

If Heathrow is not to seize up in the future, aircraft will

have to carry more passengers for each take-off and touch-down. This trend can already be seen with the recent arrival of a new generation of twin-engine, high-capacity wide-bodied airliners, the Airbus A330 and the Boeing 777. Both these aerospace manufacturers are at an advanced stage of planning for a family of airliners to carry 600, 800 and even 1,000 passengers at a time.

But such enormous airliners will also pose problems for airports, especially those such as Heathrow which were originally designed in the piston-engine era.

The Airports Council International, which is based in Geneva, estimates that it will cost more than \$100 million per site to modify runways, taxiways and aircraft aprons, and passenger terminals to accommodate the super-jumbos of the future.



Hot seat: Mike Roberts, managing director of Heathrow

Planning ahead

Why the locals appreciate Mike Roberts's efforts

The man responsible for running the world's busiest international airport is Mike Roberts.

The 51-year-old managing director of Heathrow is in the hot seat at one of the most critical junctures in the airport's history. He faces challenges from continental rivals, such as Schiphol, Paris and Frankfurt, continuing pressure from local community groups worried about the airport's impact on the environment, and the uncertainty over whether the Terminal 5 development will go ahead.

It is a tall order and Mr Roberts admits that in the early days of his job — he became MD in October 1991 — he was sometimes close to despair at the level of what he saw as negative publicity about the airport. He believes the tide has changed. "The balance of media comment has turned positive," he says.

Mr Roberts is no stranger to the controversies that such a high-profile airport can create. One of his first jobs, when joining the British Airports Authority (now BAA) in 1967 as the company's first graduate trainee, was to measure the impact that the new jumbo jets would have on

Heathrow. His subsequent career took him to Gatwick, where he rose to the post of general manager, before returning to Heathrow in the late 1980s as operations director.

His return coincided with a brief from Sir John Egan, the newly appointed BAA chairman, to shake up the airport's attitude towards its customers — be they airlines, passengers or employees. The airlines were mollified by the opening up of the airport's take-off and landing slots to more carriers, passengers were wooed with several new initiatives, and business travellers were given luxury lounges and a fast-track service at busy times.

Heathrow also scores over many other airports, he believes, because of its extensive route structure and frequency of flights. "If a business traveller misses the first New York flight of the day, he or she can still catch a later service and arrive the same day," he says.

But one of the most difficult

problems that faced Mr Roberts was that with the local community, where communication had deteriorated to almost zero. Improving relations was a priority, especially given the impending decision to go for a fifth terminal at the airport.

He initiated a series of measures aimed at wooing local communities, including investing in local projects, holding regular open meetings and acting on complaints, building a £4 million visitors' centre so that local people could come and learn about the airport, and establishing a noise "hotline". The result, according to airport surveys, has been a marked improvement in attitudes towards the airport.

Mr Roberts believes that one of the key elements of his job is to plan ahead. "The hallmark of our company has been to take a very long perspective," he says. "There are not many businesses where you need to plan your infrastructure on a 15 to 20-year timescale. If we hadn't planned ahead in the past, then Heathrow would not be the success it is today."

DAVID CHURCHILL

Keep the noise down, please

Heathrow makes every effort to take care of the neighbourhood

It is perhaps not surprising that Heathrow's "mission statement" includes a policy of being "a good neighbour, recognising the needs of the community and the environment". The airport has grown over the past half-century to become one of the dominant features of the environment in the region, affecting everything from air quality and noise to local transport and waste management.

Noise pollution, however,



The airport fines aircraft that break noise limits

remains the key area of concern for many who live and work in the area. The airport has a nine-point action plan to counter noise pollution, including increased fines for aircraft that break the noise-control procedures. In the few years the plan has been running, £200,000 paid in fines has gone to finance local community projects.

Other measures include noise insulation for more than 7,000 local homes and a repair scheme for vortex damage caused by circulating currents of turbulent air which can dislodge roof tiles.

Responsibility for co-ordinating environmental issues is given to a dedicated management team. With a budget of £4.5 million a year, a range of targets is set and reported on to the local community in an annual environmental report.

Air pollution, for example, is mainly caused not by aircraft but by cars — used by both passengers and employees — which also lead to localised road congestion. A third of Heathrow's passengers arrive or leave by public transport — the airport's long-term goal is to help to increase this to about 50 per cent. One example is the opening of the Paddington to Heathrow rail link in 1998. The airport operates the largest car-share scheme for employees in the UK. Local bus routes are subsidised and a cycle policy has recently been introduced, with convenient storage areas, showers and changing facilities.

Given the wide-open spaces that are the inherent feature of an airport, Heathrow has established the Causeway nature reserve on its eastern edge. This is available to local schools to learn about environmental management and conservation. There are also two other conservation areas for recreational use by local residents on land close to the airport's boundary. Heathrow's landscaping department has also planted 1,000 trees and shrubs and 250,000 bulbs around the airport.

Waste management at the airport is focused on recycling schemes, with the amount of waste disposed of falling by 14 per cent last year. Recycling schemes include the involvement of the Feltham Young Offenders Institution which has pioneered ways to retrieve and recycle aircraft waste.

DAVID CHURCHILL

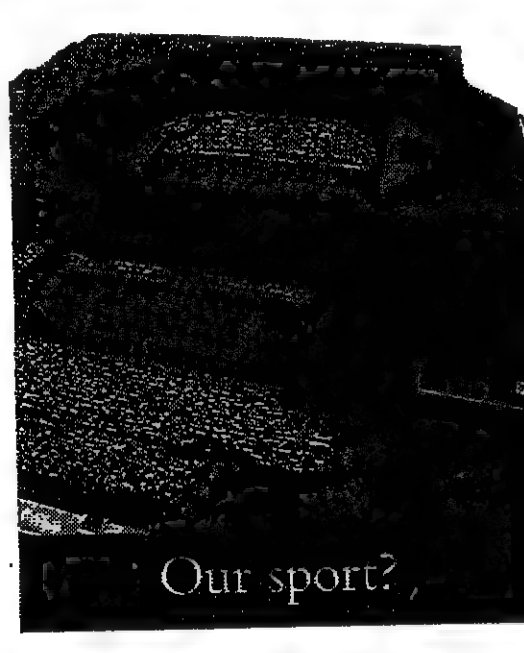
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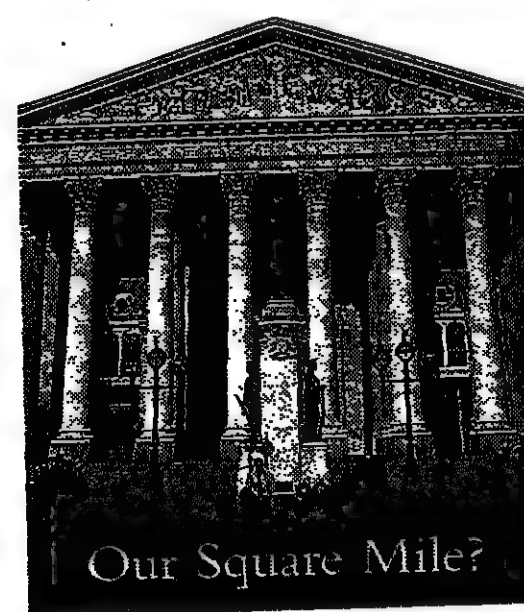
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Roe opts to reject US Open invitation

Solution on page 42 

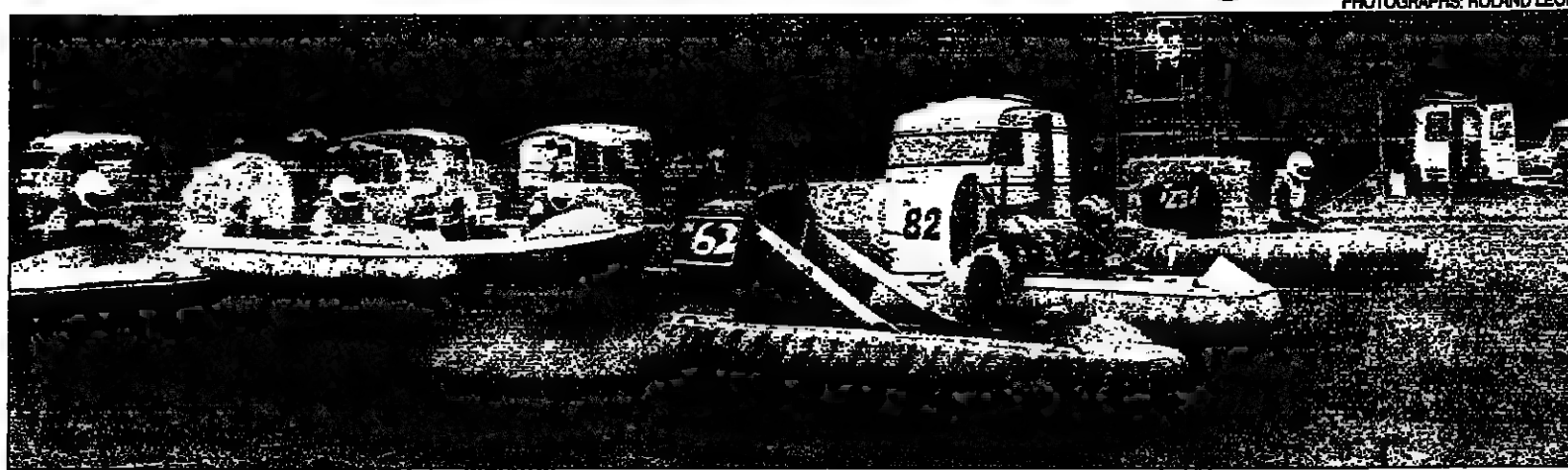
Legacy of Cockerell is flourishing in an unlikely sporting arena

Very few frills attached to racing skirts

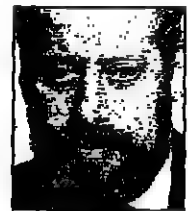
Christopher Cockerell started it in the early 1950s: experimented with coffee tins and a vacuum cleaner and, by 1959, he had perfected the exercise, built the first hovercraft. (At around that time I was researching the effect of a dustpan and brush on Lipton tea bags and got nowhere.)

The first hover, the SRN1, had its limitations, like a top speed of ten miles per hour and the inability to negotiate waves of more than 18 inches or land obstacles above a foot. To combat these shortcomings, the flexible skirt was developed, whereafter hover technology made rapid progress.

In 1962 the Vickers V43 provided a link between Rhyd and Merseyside; a year later SRN2 operated across the Severn and the year after that



Competitors roar away at the start of a hover race at Stanford Hall, in Warwickshire, top, before returning to dry land after a spell over water



FREUD ON FRIDAY

NS carried passengers from Portsmouth to the Isle of Wight. Hovercraft became larger, faster, more efficient, were used all over the world and, in 1969, Cockerell was knighted for his achievement — just like senior civil servants and unsuccessful MPs.

In common with other "interesting" inventions, the hover principle attracted pioneer amateur builders who used the technology on a variety of vessels, some with a single engine a percentage of which provided the down-draft which causes lift, while the remaining power propelled the boat; others with a forward fan for lift and a rear motor for drive. The pilot sits in the front steering by means of a joystick or bicycle handlebar and the judicious transference of weight.

Today the Hover Club of Great Britain Ltd flourishes: *Light Hovercraft*, priced £2, is its monthly magazine and tells all in "the season", which runs from spring to autumn; there

are events and competitions in a dozen locations: mostly grassy houses, leisure parks and water gardens.

This may be the last remaining truly amateur sport: the prizes are modest silverware; the fuel used is four star unleaded; the craft are classified by engine size: Formula 1 capacity, over 500cc; Formula 2, 250 to 500cc; Formula 3, under 250, the specification also for Formula junior.

The drivers are friends, help each other, share campsites where they live and sleep and barbecue and drink home-brewed beer and wine and spend the rest of the time

tuning engines, arguing about the relative merits of integrated and separate systems, working on the flexible skirt which retains the cushion of air beneath the craft.

The hulls are constructed of plywood, glass fibre or aluminium; the smaller the craft, the more vital it is to be as light as possible. There are no stars, no tantrums, no scrutineers or drug testers nor groupies; just collective jollity and dedication and a goodly number of supportive wives and children, as well as a full complement of knowledgeable, safety-conscious officials.

I watched a national race meeting at Stanford Hall in Warwickshire. The weather was dismal, the crowd minuscule, enthusiasm high. The course is about one mile, the terrain considered to be a good mix of land and water with yellow markers to show the route. The start is grand prize-like with traffic lights and a pit lane for latecomers; the vessels

soot along the flatlands, skid into the lake, race along to a wooded paddock, pass between two trees and round on the far side of the water into the last sharp turn called Bedstead Corner.

Unlike grand prix driving, you cannot get into the slipstream of the boat in front for it belches out air and pushes you back. "Ploughing" is when your nose goes into the water, causing the craft to stop rapidly and the driver to swim.

There is a novice race in which the larger craft beat the smaller... a Formula 1 can do upwards of 70 knots, twice as fast as Formula 3; the race is ten minutes plus one lap. Keith Smallwood, who is a teacher at Bradfield, brings pupils who go home and build their own hovercraft. Smallwood is reputed to be the best barbecuer on the circuit. He drives his boat into fourth place.

I meet Piers Coleman-Cooke, a 31-year-old Devonian, third in Formula 1 in the United Kingdom, second in the European competition last year.

"How did you come into the sport?" "I saw the advertisement, sent off for the book, then for the kit and built my own craft from plans before setting up in business designing hovers," he said.

He has shelves full of trophies and would rather not talk about how much it costs, but a Formula 1 will set you back all of £6,000 and there is the car and the trailer and the petrol to get to the venues and about a gallon of fuel per race. Drivers do not have mechanics, they use friends.

A junior race is on. The two leading craft fight circuit after circuit, lapping the field, with the girl cornering better, the boy driving faster in the water but unable to hit the land at the correct angle for a turn and

get away. Hell-bent on victory, the craft are side by side in the final lap: both lose control, spin, regain control and the girl's craft lifts because she is over-revving. The boy wins.

In the absence of champagne to squirt over others on the podium, he is interviewed. "How did it feel?" "Yeah, great."

"Will you go on winning?" "Yeah."

"What did you think of the race?"

"Yeah, great." This is what comes of watching Mansell and Hill on television. Paul Hibberd is a young man with a future. I am told. Ex-Bradfield, he studies aeronautical engineering at Bath University and may end up having more silver trophies on his sideboard than anyone, which is about it in the way of reward for excellence in this sport. He could become as famous as Paul McCollum, our present *numero uno*.

Robert runs into form at right time

By JENNY MACARTHUR

MICHEL ROBERT, of France, underlined his form for the Enza New Zealand Nations' Cup today — the main event of the four-day Hickstead showjumping meeting — when he and Airborne Montecillo won the Enza New Zealand Trophy by nearly nine seconds.

Erik Holstein, of Ireland, the winner of the young riders'

championship in the same arena four years ago, was second, on Ballasey Kalosha. Geoff Glazard, one of the few British riders who appeared to be trying, rather than using the competition as a schooling round for the bigger events to come, took third place, on Hello Oscar.

Airborne, a son of Abdullah, the 1984 Olympic silver medal-winner, won the same event last year when ridden by Luis

Ximenez, of Mexico. Two months after the win, the horse was sent to Robert's yard near Lyons. Robert, who had lost Miss San Patrignano, his world and European silver medal-winning horse, to Eddie Macken, of Ireland, formed an instant partnership with the ten-year-old stallion and, in 25 competitions since August, they have only twice finished outside the top six.

Despite these successes, the

Olympic Games in Atlanta are not a realistic prospect. "He is not ready yet in his mind," Robert said. Vendeone, on which he won the La Baule Grand Prix two weeks ago, and Dégina, the horse that he rides in the Nations' Cup today, are Robert's two Olympic contenders.

Di Lampard and Abbervall Dream, who had a slow clear round to finish eighth yesterday, have a chance to confirm their Olympic credentials today after being selected to join Geoff Billington, Michael Whitaker and John Whitaker in the Great Britain team for the Nations' Cup.

Ronnie Massarella, the team manager, said that it had been a difficult decision to choose between Lampard and William Funnell, on Comex — a member of the winning team last year — for the fourth place. "They both jumped well," Massarella said. "In the end, it came down to the fact that Di had a clear round and William had a fence down." Also in the opening class, Billington had a reassuring clear round on It's Otto, while Michael Whitaker, who goes first today, had four faults on Midnight Madness. John Whitaker and Welham, who had a double clear round last year, confirmed their form with third place in the latter competition, the International Stakes.

There was further cheer for the selectors yesterday when Two Step, Michael Whitaker's top horse, competing in his first competition since sustaining a hairline fracture of the withers in Bordeaux in February, jumped "out of his skin" in a small class in an outer ring. Massarella and Whitaker are confident that the 13-year-old gelding will be fit in time for Atlanta.

RESULTS: Nations' Cup meeting: Enza New Zealand Trophy, 1. Airborne Montecillo (M. Robert, F) 0 pts, 20.48sec; 2. Ballasey Kalosha (E. Holstein, GB) 0, 22.00; 3. Hello Oscar (G. Glazard, GB) 0, 23.07; 4. Enza New Zealand (M. Robert, F) 0, 23.07.

International Stakes: 1. Capricious 202 (S. Cusack, GB) 0, 11.14; 2. Airborne (M. Robert, F) 0, 11.15; 3. Welham (J. Whitaker, GB) 0, 12.05.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 39

DANDIACAL

(a) Of the nature of, or characteristic of, a dandy; dandified. A Carlyle derivative of dandy, after *hypochondriacal* and the like. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, 1831: "The Dandiacal Body. It appears as if this Dandiacal Sect were but a new modification of that primal Superstition, Self-worship."

EGGER

(b) A collector's name for various species of moths, especially the Oak Egger-moth (*Bombyx quercus*). "It spans itself a brittle brown case, in form of an egg, like caterpillar in the next plate. For which reason they are called by some the great and small Egger."

DRAGEE

(c) A sugar plum or sweetmeat in the centre of which is a drug: intended for the more pleasant administration of medicinal substances. From the French for a sweetmeat or confection. Also a silver-and-gold sugared almond of the sort that Greeks give guests at weddings and christenings.

EUSKARIAN

(e) Basque. Used by some ethnologists to designate that pre-Aryan element in the population of Europe, which they suppose to be typically represented by the Basques. From the Basque *Euskara*, *Eskara*, *Ustara* the Basque language.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Qg7! Nxg7; 2. Nhe+ Kh8; 3. Nxf7! Rxf7; 4. Nxf7! Kg8; 5. Nxd8 and White won easily.

Ruddles County Riddles.

No. 6. Rope Trick.

Bill Allen was running	bridge could only support	he missed the train.
to catch the train home	181 lbs — Bill knew he	When he told his wife
after work — on the way	weighed 180, and the	Angie, who is a circus
back he had bought two	four packs one pound	performer, why he was
four packs of Ruddles	each — Bill decided the	late, she immediately
County. As he was late	only way to get himself	came up with a solution
and due to miss the train	and his beloved County	to solve his dilemma.
he decided to use a short	across was to make two	Can you work out
cut which took him over a	trips across the bridge	Angie's solution?
small rope bridge.	carrying one pack at a	
Bill knew that the	time. But by doing this	



RADIO CHOICE

Looking back to innocence

I Was That Teenager. Radio 4 (FM), 10.00am.

If Hunter Davies's new series goes on as it has begun, I would say that we are in for a string of Friday morning feasts of reminiscence. He has been lucky to get Lady Longford for starters. Coming up to 90 she may be, but what crystal-clear memories of her teenage years in the Twenties she summons up! There is no hint in anything she says that she will end up like one of the "old crones of the fairy-stories", which is how she says young women of her day used to regard nonagenarians. Her brother, using silkworms, taught her the facts of life. Boyfriends meant just that — friends who happened to be boys, nothing more. Small wonder she was somewhat in awe of her doctor father. He would dig out her blackheads with sharp needles.

Degas: His Ideas and his Art. Radio 3, 9.55pm.

Restricted to a miserly five minutes slot per item, Richard Kendall cannot afford to waste a single word in his selections from the letters and notebooks of Degas, and offering his own thoughts on them. Nonetheless, he has whetted my appetite for the Degas exhibition now running at the National Gallery in London. Episode one finds Degas in Italy in 1855, studying the Renaissance masters, sketching a Giorgione landscape and settling with anger when a cathedral organist blasts out something from *Luz Traviata* just as he starts to draw a sketch, and discovering something of the sadness "of those who are involved with art".

Peter Davalle

RADIO 1

FM Stereo 4.00am Clive Warren 6.30 Chris Evans 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Lisa (Anson, Int) at 12.30-12.45pm Newsbeat 2.00 Noddy Campbell 4.00 Mark Goodier, Int at 5.30-5.45 Newsbeat 7.00 Essential Selection, with Pete Tong 10.00 One in the Jungle 12.00 Radio 1 Rap Show Live in the UK Jan 3.00am Annie Nightingale

RADIO 2

FM Stereo 6.00am Martin Kelner 7.30 Sarah Kennedy 9.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Anne Robinson 1.30 Debbie Thorne 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Helen Sharman 7.00 Maestro 7.30 Friday Night is Music Night 8.45 The Thirty-Nine Steps, by John Buchan (4/10) 9.30 Listen to the Band 10.00 George Melly Radio 2 Arts Programme 12.05am Charles Nowe

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme incl 6.55, 7.55 Racing preview 8.35 The Magazine incl Video Review and News from Europe 12.00 Midday with Mel Int 12.35pm Moneycheck 1.15 Entertainment News 2.05 Rascos on Five incl 3.45 Entertainment News 4.00 Newsweek, Int 4.45 Entertainment News 7.00 News Extra incl at 7.20 Friday Sport Rugby League Castledore Tigers v Warrington; Motor racing the buildup to the Spanish Grand Prix; Tennis: The French Open from Paris 9.30 Sports Shop, with Adrian Langford 10.05 Paper Talk, with Brian Alexander and Phil Shipley 11.00 Night Extra 12.05am After Hours 2.05 Up All Night, with Richard Dainy

TALK RADIO

6.30am Paul Rose 10.00 Scott Chesholm 1.00pm Alan Roeburn 3.00 Tommy Boyd 6.00 Peter Doolley 7.00 Sport 10.00 Mike Allen 10.05am Dickon

CLASSIC FM

4.00am Mark Githris 6.00 Mike Read 8.00 Henry Kelly 12.00 Susannah Simons 2.00pm Graham Dene 4.00pm Clive 6.00 News 6.30 Sports 7.00 Showcases 8.00 Concert 10.00 Michael Mappin 10.00am Through the Night

VIRGIN RADIO

8.00am Russ 'n' Jono 9.00 Richard Sharpe 12.00 Graham Dene 4.00pm Nicky Home 7.30 Paul Coyne 10.30 Mark Forrest 2.00am Howard Pearce

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air Beethoven (String Quartet in D, Op 18 No 3); Berwald (Symphony No 1 in G minor, Sinfonia sinuosa); Vivaldi (Violin Concerto in G minor, Op 9 No 3); MacGillivray (Twelve Nigths); Mozart (Andreas Chriestl Janulus); Brahms (String Quartet in F, Op 88)

Morning Collection with Michael Haydn

(Sonata, Duo, in C, P127); Faure (Incidental Music, Caligula); Prokofiev (Piano Concerto No 5); 10.00 Musical Encounters, includes Orton (Conductus, Versiones sinfonicas); Szymanowski (Trio for oboe, clarinet and bassoon); Vivaldi (Flute Concerto in D, RV428); Rodrigo (Sonata pempierle); Berlioz (Nuit d'Inesce, The Trojans, Act IV) 11.00 Chorus (Overture: Les Abencerrages); Haydn, Art Rosinada; 3 Movements from Claudio Palestrina 11.15 Artist of the Week: Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord, Bach (Cantata No 205 Der Zerkerspielstille Aulus)

Composer of the Week: Richard Rodney Bennett

Includes Let's go live in the country; Partita for Orchestra; Early 10.00 Concerto for Stan Getz

1.00pm St David's Hall

Lundholm and Reclita; Vanburgh Quartet, Mozart (String Quartet in D minor, K421); Beethoven (String Quartet in E flat, Op 14, Part 2)

2.05 The BBC Orchestras, BBC Scottish Orchestra under Christopher Gayford, Panufnik

(Old Polish Suite; Lullaby)

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping Forecast (LW only) 6.00 News Briefing and weather 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today Int 7.00, 7.30, 8.00, 8.30 News 7.25, 8.25 Sport 7.45 Thought for the Day 8.40 Selling Alone around the World, William Roberts reads Captain Joshua Slocum's account of the first solo voyage around the world, which he completed in 1898 after three years at sea (5/5)

9.00 Films 9.05 Desert Island Discs. The theatre and film producer Michael White talks to Sue Lawley about his life and musical tastes (1)

9.45 Feedback. With Chris Durrley

10.00-10.30 News: I Was That Teenager (FM only). See Choice (1/6)

10.00 An Act of Worship (LW only)

10.15 This Scepter'd Isle (LW only) 10.30 Woman's Hour, Introduced from Glasgow by Ruth Wishart. Serial: Heat Wave by Penelope Lively. Read by Rowena Cooper (4/12)

11.30 The Natural History Programme

12.00 News; You and Yours 12.25pm The Food Programme 1.25 Weather

1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke

1.40 The Archers (1) 1.55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 News; The Classic Series: A Handful of Dust by Evelyn Waugh (2/2) (1)

3.00 News; The Afternoon Shift

4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Paul Gambaccini explores an exhibition on theatre and listens to new CD releases

4.45 Short Story: May and June

Julie 1 Wallace reads Ruth Rendell's story (1) 5.00 PM. With Charlie Lee-Potter and Chris Lowe 5.50 Shipping Forecast 5.56 Weather

6.00 Six O'Clock News

6.30 Going Places. David Stafford reveals more weekend pursuits 7.00 News 7.05 The Archers 7.20 Pick of the Week 8.05 Any Questions? topical discussion in Bath with panellists: Carmen Colli, writer and journalist; Peter Hitchens, assistant editor of the Daily Express; Margaret Hodge, Labour MP; and William Wakefield MP. Chair: Secretary to the Treasury

8.50 Law in Action. With Marcel Berins

9.15 Letter from America by Alistair Cooke 9.30 Kaleidoscope Feature: The Further Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1) 9.59 Weather

10.00 World Tonight. With Robin Lustig

10.45 Book at Bedtime: Bookshop. Maggie Stoad reads Penelope Fitzgerald's novel (5/10) 11.00 Week Ending. With Sally Grace 11.25 Fourth Column. A new series begins 11.45 A Likely Story? Presented by Les Woodland (1) 12.00 News incl 12.27am Weather 12.30 The Late Book: The Last Girl by Penelope Evans (1/6) 12.45 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service (LW only)

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.8-99.3. RADIO 2. FM 89.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 156. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 908. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55pm). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. 105.8; MW 157. 125.5. MW 1053, 1068. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson and Jane Gregory

هكذا من الاعمال

Things went a little too far last night when Viv was overheard uttering to an Unaccompanied Minor (or "Um") as if he were a kind of parcel. The Um has gone missing," she exclaimed on the phone. But I put it on the bus, at the front. How could you miss it? She described the Um in terms of height (about two foot) and by sex (a boy), but the non-gender-specific pronoun kept recurring, because from the other side of the fence, passengers are indeed parcels — parcels who complain and wander, off blindly, get stuck in the lift, and fall off escalators from the hell of it. Yet Viv, Dave and Jean-Marie never retaliate. Which is why we admire them so much, I expect. And why *Airport* is such a good telly.

But I cannot let a Thursday night go by without a fix of A1 Airport (BBC). Last night's fifth instalment concerned Christmas at Heathrow, and featured Dave the policeman, Viv the flight dispatcher, and Jean-Marie the terminal manager. A few weeks back I couldn't decide whose side I was on, but now no doubt remains: the staff are heroes and the public should be sedated on arrival, wheeled through on trolleys with tickets and passports clamped between their teeth. Years ago a department store offered me a job in Customer Liaison, and I am as

CHANNEL 4

35am The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (r)
(5831431)

00 The Big Breakfast (32290)
00 Saved by the Bell: The College Years
 (r) (Telecast) (7046702) 9.25 The Pink
 Panther Show (r) (s) (7046709) 9.50
 California Dreams (r) (8862859) 10.20
 Biker Mice from Mars (r) (6204677)
 10.45 Mork and Mindy (r) (8243580)
 11.10 Dog City (r) (s) (3269305)
35 Wildside (r) (s) (8065580) 12.00 Garden
 Party (r) (Telecast) (82162) 12.30pm

15 FILM: *The Revolt of Mamie Stover* (1956) with Jane Russell and Richard Egan. A drama about a Honolulu dance-hall hostess. Directed by Raoul Walsh.

(Telcast) (5228/77)
00 The Lost Waterway (r) (Telcast) (236)
4.30 Fifteen to One (Telcast) (s) (122)
5.00 Searching for Susan (r) (Telcast)
(a) (2526)
00 TFI Friday, Chris Evans introduces
 another eclectic mix of guests, including


Jack Dee, Vinnie Jones and Hugh Laurie. Music is provided by Ocean Colour Scene, the Cure and Dodgy (s) (457833)

00 Channel 4 News (Teletext) (871948)

55 Book Choice. Blake Morrison reviews Nobel Prize winner Seamus Heaney's book of poetry, *The Spirit Level* (Teletext)

00 Garden Party. From the Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton, Shropshire (Telexed) (s) (9877)

30 Life After Birth. Alison is becoming claustrophobic after spending two months cooped up with her baby in the flat (Teletext) (s) (58528)



Jack and Jeremy and pile (10.30pm)

.30 [REDACTED] **Jack and Jeremy's Real Lives** (Teletext) (s) (941054)
.05 **Beardness TV.** A lighthearted look at black popular culture (s) (237948)
.35 **TFI Friday** (r) (454493)
.40pm **Elvis** (s) (2862555)

10 **FRID:** *The Brain Machine* (1955, b/w) with Elizabeth Allan, Maxwell Reed and Russell Napier. A psychiatrist is kidnapped when she discovers that a criminal's brainwaves are similar to those of a psychopathic killer. Directed by Ken Hughes (Teletext) (996401)

45 Best Specials. Music from Salad and
EMF (r) (s) (9938130). Ends at 3.40

00 The
11.55

CMT EUROPE

Country music from 6am to 7pm on satellite, 24 hours on cable, including 6pm Saturday Nite Dance Ranch

ZEE TV

7.00am Jaagran (88005632) 7.30 Aam Morning (28371035) 8.30 Zee Presents (4732895) 9.00 Shree Krishna (47303846) 9.30 Nemesis India (57536504) 10.00

Legal	Barengi Apri Bate (29303851)	10.30
ist Fling	Muslatahin (47328332)	11.00 Zeika Ke
Nowl	Sater (18686035)	11.30 Bhank, ek Koh
er Files	(17829054)	12.30pm Bunlyaad (57530325)
	1.00 Barengi FILM: Goorjan (55312403)	
	4.00 Video Junction (59222528)	4.30 Khei
	Time (59211412)	5.00 Zee Zone
	(19174323)	5.30 It's My Show (59202764)
	6.00 Zabean Sembis Ka (59203877)	6.30

1.30 All
 Brother
 3.30
 Cartoon

then TNT films as below.

7:00pm WCW Nitro (32049431) 8.00
Around the World Under the Sea (1968)
(32036987) 12.00
A West Foot Season (1986)
(50082239) 10.00
The Three Godfathers (1948)
(97478122) 12.00
Soylent Green (1973)
(40613488) 1.50pm
The Green Slime (1968)
(50699738) 3.30-
5.00
The Tugboat (1967)
(28834048)

CNN/QVC

CNN provides 24-hour news and QVC is the home shopping channel.

PERFORMANCE

7.00pm Elaine Ellis Trio 8.00pm Aria 8.30pm
Dancefloor J.J. Garcia J. J. Garcia 8.30pm Culture

2) 9.00
 and Spul
 Years
 Seeds
 752867)
 11-1 for
 Series
 761870)

Adams row's World 4.05 Question Time 5.30 The
018073 Travel Show 8.05 Question Time 8.30 Film
f) 12.00 '98 12.10ms Newswright 1.20 Britain in View
0 Dawn 2.10 Newswright 3.20 Window on Europe
4.05 Correspondent

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New ball upsets the established order on clay courts of French Open

Rusedski bows out in battle of big servers

FROM DAVID MILLER IN PARIS

THE debate is on. Will the faster, smaller tennis balls in use at the French Open championships produce a serve-and-volley winner such as Pete Sampras, Goran Ivanisevic, Michael Stich or Marc Rosset? The first, indeed, since Yannick Noah in 1983. The straight-sets win yesterday by Stich against Greg Rusedski, by 6-3, 7-5, 6-3, in the second round of the men's singles suggests that he could be one of those in the frame.

The big-hearted, big-serving but limited Rusedski, Canadian-born of Ukrainian, Russian and Polish heritage but representing Great Britain, probably diminished his chance by not attacking the net. Stich's planned strategy of forcing him back worked all too well.

After the five-set victory by Sampras, the No 1 seed, the previous day, when he beat Sergi Bruguera, the Spanish clay-court specialist, Ivanisevic yesterday whipped David Wheaton, another big server, 7-5, 6-2, 6-4. The evidence was accumulating.

Thomas Muster, the defending champion, added to it with his comments after beating Gerard Soves, of France, for the loss of only four games. "I think they [the balls] might be a little lighter and faster," he said. "If it's warm like this, they fly more... I just think that all the tournaments before the French Open should use the same ball. Otherwise, why would you play Hamburg and Rome as a preparation if they use a different ball?"

Muster, who is hitting the ball as though he was carrying a shoulder-motor, added that he considered Paris to be the fastest of all clay-court events and that it can be advantageous to the serve-and-volleyer (by contrast, he tends to stay back and overwhelm opponents by devastating ground-stroke power). Paris is as fast, he said, as the synthetic hard courts at the US Open. "It is the running that is

different," he said, "because, on a hard court, you cannot slide."

The balls, manufactured by Dunlop-France, are 10 per cent faster because of reduction in size to the legal minimum limit and because of technical development of the felt and rubber. Although the character of clay-court play carries a special charm, the improved scope for the volleyer is to be welcomed. The interminable rallies of a decade or so ago were as unacceptable as Wimbledon's three-shot equivalents. When

Results 39

Bjorn Borg beat Guillermo Vilas in the Paris final of 1978, the second point of the first game lasted 94 strokes.

The luckless Soves probably hit barely that number of strokes in the entire match. It was a strange contrast: Muster grunting painfully on every shot as though shifting cement bags, Soves remaining silent, other than when some unforced error would draw from him a distinctively French noise of disappointment. Muster, the No 2 seed, now meets Adrian Panata, of Romania.

The possible turning point for Rusedski in his match with Stich came and went in the



Ivanisevic: powerful

third and ninth games of the second set, in each of which he had two break points. He had another to break back for 4-3 in the third set, but, by then, Stich, the Wimbledon champion in 1991 and Grand Slam Cup-winner the next year, had the match fully in hand.

Considering that, in Milan this year, while preparing to meet Guy Forget, Stich damaged the ankle that he had seriously injured in 1995 and underwent an operation, his form is better than he might have expected. For a tall man — 6ft 4in — he has excellent mobility and the patience and stability to play the slower clay-court game. Yet it was his service that proved too much for Rusedski.

Without being patronising, Stich, who at 27 is five years the older, said that he had felt that Rusedski was unsure how he should tactically play the match. "I was surprised he stayed back as much, didn't come in to volley," Stich said. "His game is based on serve and is dangerous on fast surfaces. To have a chance, he's got to play serve-and-volley."

At 1-1 in the second set, two forced errors found Stich at 30-40, which he saved with a drive-volley. A good backhand return and Stich's netted half-volley gave Rusedski another game point, which Stich retrieved with a first service. There were five more deuces, on all of them Stich having advantage, before he levelled for 2-2.

A perfect, dipping backhand service return gave Rusedski 40-15 at 4-4, but again two first services came to Stich's rescue. Significantly, he was able to produce his best strokes when under pressure, a quality that Rusedski could not match. Rusedski managed to save two set points at 6-5; on the third, Stich outplayed him.

"If he plays like that through the tournament, he has a chance [of winning]," Rusedski said. "He seemed to tire in the second set, but played great break points. For



Rusedski delivers a typically heavy service against Stich yesterday, but it was all in vain

me, it was a positive experience, but I have to learn how to win the big points." He added that Brian Teacher, his new coach, the American who is working with him on an experimental basis, had improved his backhand and that he had been trying to keep up the hopes of his adopted nation. If he serves well, he thinks that anything is possible at Wimbledon. Stich now meets Mikael Tillström, of Sweden, with a prospective confrontation with Muster in the last 16.

Ivanisevic, the No 5 seed, wearing that hawk-like expression that must intimidate his prey, produced an all-court game to snuff out Wheaton. In the previous round, Wheaton had hit 19 aces. Now, little

would work. Just when it seemed that he might flicker into life, with a break back for 4-1 in the third set, Ivanisevic produced a stunning backhand pass, a fine forehand volley and a backhand cross-court return of service to reach 5-4 — a warning for Chang, the No 4 seed, whom he is scheduled to meet in the quarter-finals.

Building society sponsors league

BY PETER BALL

THE Football League may be the poor relation in English football these days, but the sums going into the nation's second league next season would happily be grabbed by several other leading sports.

A new £5.25 million sponsorship deal over three years was agreed between the league and Nationwide Building Society yesterday to add to the new television deal with Sky, which will earn the league £125 million over five years.

The sums may not prevent the gap between the Premier League and the rest becoming unbridgeable, but they should ensure, at the least, that the league remains viable in its own terms.

Nationwide Building Society, who replace Endsleigh Insurance as the league's sponsor, clearly think so. The Nationwide Football League has a ring to it that Endsleigh never achieved, and it is a statement of fact. The Football League may lack the glamour and hype of the FA Cup and Premiership, but the country's oldest league covers the nation from Carlisle to Plymouth.

"Nationwide's outlook is very close to our own because any national league, despite its competitive nature, has to operate in the best interests of its members," Gordon McKeag, the Football League president, said yesterday. "The reach and geographical spread of both Nationwide and league football also demonstrates that we have common interests deeply rooted in the fabric of local communities up and down the country. It would be difficult to imagine a more perfect combination."

Barclays enjoyed perhaps the most rewarding football sponsorship of all time during their six years until the greed of the big clubs tore the Football League apart. Nationwide might not quite match that, but it could enjoy relative success.

"Nationwide is an organisation with strong roots in the community," Brian Davis, Nationwide's chief executive, said. "We are always looking at ways of promoting awareness of the benefits we can offer and I believe this deal represents good value for both Nationwide and the Football League."

World Cup vote, page 38

Athletes may avoid ban after drug tests

BY JOHN GOODBODY

MORE than 200 of Great Britain's Olympic competitors will undergo special drugs testing before Atlanta, but even if some of them are found positive, they will not be barred from taking part in the Games.

Although the British Olympic Association (BOA) believes that the new, highly-sensitive equipment at St Thomas' Hospital, London, may catch some competitors, it also fears a successful legal challenge, because the machine has yet to be accepted fully by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The Sports Council said yesterday that two sets of tests will be carried out by Dr David Cowan, the head of the IOC-accredited laboratory at King's College London, as part of an enhanced out-of-competition programme.

The first will be at King's, which does not own a high resolution mass spectrometer, that will cost £300,000 to install. The other tests will be on the new machine at St Thomas' and will cost the BOA and Sports Council about £7,000.

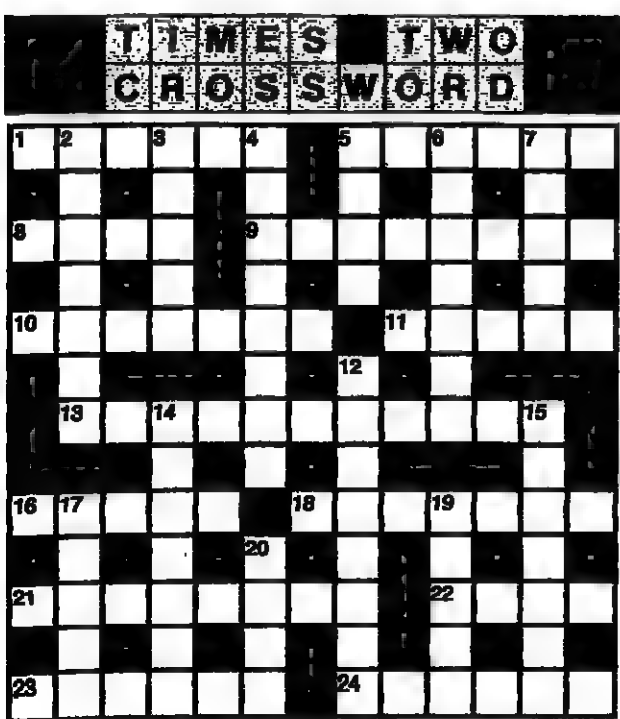
A Sports Council spokeswoman said: "If anyone is found positive at King's, then that competitor will be barred from going to Atlanta. However, if the positive is declared at St Thomas', then only the national governing body of that athlete will be informed."

The BOA hopes that the competitor will then withdraw from the Games to save himself and the team from possible embarrassment in Atlanta, where the highly-sensitive mass spectrometer will be used on all samples. However, it is still questionable whether the IOC will act on the results.

The new equipment can detect banned substances in lower concentrations and more retrospectively. Competitors who have taken drugs several months before can be caught.

Two months ago, Tamas Ajan, the secretary of the International Weightlifting Federation, announced that 11 competitors had tested positive using the conventional machine. When the high-tech mass spectrometer was employed, however, this figure rose to 78.

Scotland lose, page 39



No 796

ACROSS

- 1 Suspend (4,2); emotional problem (4,2)
- 5 The face (6)
- 8 Revolving shaft (4)
- 9 Comprehensive (8)
- 10 Circuit of all bases (4,3)
- 11 Agree; bell sound (5)
- 13 Short distance (away) (6,5)
- 16 Haste; an amphetamine (slang) (5)
- 18 Rod, regal symbol (7)
- 21 Something made in remembrance (8)
- 22 A blank (4)
- 23 Population count (6)
- 24 Capture back (6)

DOWN

- 2 Worried (7)
- 3 Land for priest (hist.) (5)
- 4 Imagined; painted (8)
- 5 Power to prohibit (4)
- 6 Stifle (7)
- 7 Fairy-tale brothers (5)
- 12 One making punctilious demands (8)
- 14 Burdensome (7)
- 15 Midlands town; Kingmaker Earl (7)
- 17 Vex (5)
- 19 Fulcrum (5)
- 20 Weight on bowl side; irrational prejudice (4)

The solution to 795 will be printed Wednesday, June 5

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Ramprakash opens century account

BY MICHAEL HENDERSON

LORD'S (first day of four; Middlesex won toss): Middlesex have scored 322 for five against Yorkshire.

WHEN Mark Ramprakash sparkles as he did here, adorning the first proper day of summer with wonderful strokes, his inability to establish himself as a Test batsman can bring only regrets. To make his first century of the season, he had to play well, and he did, building his innings from a wary start to dominate the bowlers completely before Hartley bowled him for 134.

He has never played like this for England, and it is unlikely now that he ever will.

People who do not take their chances find future opportunities withdrawn. After his miserable time against West Indies last summer and his temperamental problems during the winter in South Africa, Ramprakash is no longer in the selectors' thoughts.

Yet had an overseas visitor walked into Lord's, he might

have wondered how England could afford not to pick a batsman who commands such a wide range of strokes. Yorkshire did not bowl poorly and Ramprakash had the measure of them all. The day lost some of its bloom when he was out.

Of his 21 boundaries, the three that took him to the brink of his century were the

LORD'S SCOREBOARD

MIDDLESEX: First innings
P N Workless c Bailey b Hartley 1
J C Pooley b Gough 28
J C Harrison c Bailey b White 37
M R Ramprakash b Hartley 134
M W Gelling b Silverwood 17
J D Carr not out 88
J K R Brown not out 33
Extras (lb 4, nb 10) 14
Total (5 wickets, 104 overs) 322
A R C Fraser, R A Fay, P C R Tufnell and D Follett to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS 1-5, 2-36, 3-138, 4-182, 5-265.

BOWLING: Gough 20-5-55-1; Hartley 20-7-43-2; Silverwood 17-4-56-1; White 16-2-63-1; Morris 8-2-30-0; Stamp 21-6-54-2; Brown 2-0-10-0.

YORKSHIRE: D Byas, M P Vaughan, M G Bevan, A McGrath, C White, J R Bailey, A C Morris, P J Hartley, D Gough, C E W Silverwood, R D Stamp.

Bonus points: Middlesex 3, Yorkshire 2.

Umpires, J C Balderson and A A Jones.

Hostilities resumed, page 40
Other scoreboards, page 40

Come in Brewster, your time is up

Edward Gorman finds record-chaser
all at sea as Blyth demands boat back

Samantha Brewster, who is attempting to become the first woman to sail solo non-stop around the world against the prevailing winds and currents, is facing an unexpected obstacle in Chay Blyth, who wants his boat back before she will have had a chance to complete a circumnavigation.

In order to qualify for the record, Brewster is having to sail north from the Cape of Good Hope as far as Cape Finisterre off the coast of Spain and return south to Santos in Brazil from where she was forced to restart her voyage in early January after putting in for repairs.

Blyth, whose company, the Challenge Business, has rented the 67ft yacht to Heath Insured, Brewster's sponsor, only until the end of July, wants her to forget about Brazil and come straight back into Southampton.

This would mean that her

voyage would not qualify as a record since she would not have covered the distance required by the World Sailing Speed Record Council.

Blyth, however, who was the first to complete a non-stop westward circumnavigation in 1972, is adamant that this voyage should not continue longer than necessary. "It's ridiculous trying to break a record from Santos to Santos," he said yesterday. "I mean, where the hell is Santos? I wish I'd never heard of the place."

"We'd like the boat. She will still have sailed around the world single-handed, although not non-stop, and that is still an amazing achievement for a lady, going against the prevailing winds and currents: but if she goes all the

way down to Santos, it'll cause us problems."

Blyth, who rented the boat out for around £350,000, has it earmarked for an important promotional tour of the United States, which is supposed

to begin in September. This will follow a substantial refit lasting about 12 weeks, when it will be repainted in the livery of Toshiba, the Japanese electronics giant. If Brewster does go down to Santos, she may not arrive until August: it will take another six weeks to get back.

Brewster, who has fought bravely to keep her voyage on course, is off west Africa, struggling in rainy weather without much wind as she tries to weigh up her options.

John Mackenzie-Green, the chief executive of Heath Insured, said: "If that lot [The Challenge Business] says she's got to come back early, I'll fight them tooth and nail," Mackenzie-Green will let Brewster make up her mind.

With Brewster now about four weeks from Finisterre, a final decision will have to be made soon. If she does go to Brazil, it will be a great and historic achievement.



Brewster: in dilemma

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FBI follows arms trail to Peking officials

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

EVEN hardened agents of the American Federal Bureau of Investigation posing as Miami gangsters were astounded when their contacts acting for Chinese arms companies indicated just before their arrest last week that they could offer mortars, rocket-launchers, machineguns and hand-held surface-to-air missiles.

The FBI men believed them. The seven objects of their "sting" had already delivered \$4 million (£2.64 million) of Chinese AK-47 automatic rifles and ammunition.

"It's quite a thought," a Washington official said, musing about the missiles. "There you are, landing at Miami airport, and down below some bastard who's failed to black-mail the airline which flies your jumbo has you in his crosshairs."

The FBI has arrested seven suspects in the operation, which was triggered too soon to catch the biggest Peking-based fish because American newspapers were preparing to divulge details. Arrest warrants have been issued for seven more, including two senior officials at Nortec, a state-owned firm which supplies weapons to the People's Liberation Army and is under the control of the State Council, chaired by Li Peng, the Prime Minister.

The US agency has also accused another firm, Polytechniques, of involvement. This is an army enterprise headed by He Ping, a son-in-law of Deng Xiaoping, the senior leader.

Both firms immediately described claims that they were involved in the arms deal

and smuggling as "sheer speculation" — the standard reaction in Peking to foreign allegations of wrongdoing.

However, instead of a blanket denial, Shen Guofang, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, said: "The most important thing to do at the moment is to look into the case before doing anything else."

A US spokesman has said Washington hopes the affair will not further complicate bilateral relations because it was "merely criminal".

Even if the People's Liberation Army is proved to have been involved, the Government may not be. During the Iran-Iraq war, Chinese weapons were used by both sides. Foreign experts believe that the Politburo and the Foreign Ministry were unaware of those sales.

The line that connects the army and the Government, however, is the party, and if questions are asked about its involvement, Mr Shen will have a harder time denying complicity. About a quarter of those on the Central Committee are army officers.

It is now common among Western specialists to refer to the army as PLA Inc. About 10,000 firms — not including those in the arms trade — are admitted to be under the army's management. There are, in fact, many more. Five years ago the CIA put the army's non-weapon earnings at \$5 billion a year.

But much of the activity is corrupt and profits army commanders and their civilian accomplices, many of whom are in the party and the Government.

Chefs honour Proust in remembrance of fine repast

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN MILLERS-COMBRAY

FRANCE'S twin obsessions with great writing and good food have come together in the Eure-et-Loir region, southwest of Paris, where more than 40 local chefs have launched a gastro-literary crusade entitled *A table avec Marcel Proust*.

Throughout this month, restaurants in the region where Proust spent his summers have been offering a range of dishes based on those lovingly described in his masterpiece, *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (Remembrance of Things Past).

Despite his ill health, Proust's appetite was remarkably robust and Anne Borrel, Secretary-General of the Marcel Proust Society, has filleted his great novel to come up with a vast array of delicacies, including *Boeuf à la mode*, *Asperges à toutes les sauces* and, of course, the memory-suffused *madeleines*.

Proust's simple but substantial dishes could hardly be further removed from nouvelle cuisine, and those who find his prose occasionally hard to digest might feel the same about some of the 15 different menus drawn up in honour of the great writer.

The project kicked off last month, for example, with a



Table for three: Jeremy Irons, centre, Alain Delon and Ornella Muti in *Swann in Love*, based on Proust's work

dyspepsia-defying banquet of six courses, each with its relevant quotation. Some restaurants are offering Proust dishes, while others provide entire menus with titles such as "The Uncle Jules", "The Jean Santeuil" and "The Nor-

pois Dinner". Roast Swann is not on offer, although many dishes are named after Proust's character.

The current campaign to revive old-fashioned French cuisine would have found favour with Proust, whose

culinary tastes were, as Mme Borrel explains, firmly in the "traditional bourgeois" camp. Few writers have better appreciated the link between food and words. Indeed, after a particularly toothsome dinner in 1909, Proust wrote a

note to his cook, Céline Cotin, wondering whether his writing would live up to her cooking. "I hope," he wrote, "that my style is as brilliant, clear and solid as your aspic — that my ideas are as flavourful as your carrots, and as nourish-

ing and fresh as your meat. While waiting to complete my own work, I congratulate you on yours."

Millers-Combray, 15 miles from Chartres, where Proust spent his summers at "the house of Tante Léonie" and which he immortalised in his work, is the centre of the campaign to put Proust on the culinary map.

There, at Le Florent restaurant, opposite the church often referred to by Swann, Hervé Prioleau, the chef, is offering a complete Marcel Proust menu for Fr185 (£23).

Here you can be sampled the *Boeuf à la mode* that so inspired the author. "The cold beef with carrots made its appearance," Proust wrote, "bedded down by the Michelangelo of our kitchen on enormous crystals of jelly like blocks of transparent quartz."

Or a strawberry mousse prompted by this passage: "What is this pretty, scoured thing we are eating?" asked Ski.

"That is called strawberry mousse," said Mme Verdurin, "It's fan-tastic."

The Dining with Proust project has proved so popular that a second edition is ready being planned at Mme Borrel has brought out a cookbook entitled *Proust. The Rediscovered Cuisine* with chef Alain Senderens.

brave public r Peres



Mitterrand: defended by illegitimate daughter

Mitterrand daughter fights back

FROM SUSAN BELL IN PARIS

MAZARINE PINGEOT, the illegitimate daughter of François Mitterrand, the late President, has granted her first interview to *Paris Match*, France's best-known weekly magazine. She berates the French media as "unscrupulous" and pays homage to her father as "a humanist", and "a self-taught man of the Left" who led a "model life".

France learnt of her existence less than two years ago when the magazine was responsible for "revealing" what the chattering classes had known for years when it published photographs of the student with Ali, her North African boyfriend.

Mlle Pingeot, 21, daughter of Mitterrand's long-term mistress, Anne Pingeot, said she agreed to the interview to publicise the opening of the Institut François Mitterrand of which she is a founding member. Its mission is to "contribute to the knowledge of contemporary French political and social history". Tens of thousands of political papers dating back to before the Second World War and including his terms in office will be available to researchers.

US envoy accused on Bosnia weapons

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

PETER GALBRAITH, the American Ambassador to Croatia and a scion of the Democratic establishment, yesterday became the target of a renewed Republican assault on President Clinton and a possible diplomatic casualty of the Bosnian war.

After three years in Zagreb, Mr Galbraith faced the glaring publicity of a congressional hearing into allegations that he and Charles Redman, the American special envoy to the former Yugoslavia, had followed the bidding of their Washington masters and helped to introduce a covert Iranian arms smuggling pipeline to Bosnian government forces as early as 1994.

After 14 years as a senior staff member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the son of the famous economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, had made all the right connections before he was sent to Zagreb in 1993.

All that has changed with revelations of his role in the shipment of Iranian arms to Bosnia at a time when the Clinton Administration, officially at least, maintained to both Congress and the allies that it was abiding by the terms of a United Nations arms embargo in the Balkans.

The White House has been eager, in advance of November's elections, to distance President Clinton from the process and Mr Galbraith apparently has been thrown to the congressional lions. Many in Washington now believe it unlikely that the Oxford and Harvard-educated Mr Galbraith will gain another post even under a second Clinton Administration.

Western Sahara peace bid starts to crumble

Rabat United Nations efforts to avert renewed conflict in Western Sahara have begun to collapse after a Security Council vote to suspend registration of the native Sahrawi people for a referendum on self-determination (Mark Hubbard writes).

The registration process has been blocked since disagreement between Morocco and the Polisario Front, after Morocco's attempts to register

as voters 50,000 people with dubious links to the territory. The Polisario Front is seeking the independence of the former Spanish colony.

A UN mandate to organise the vote expired yesterday, but has been renewed until November 30. A UN military operation to monitor a 1991 ceasefire will be reduced from 288 to 230 observers, and most of the 40 UN civilian police will be withdrawn.



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Face to face with 'the most beautiful' Fox brother

Life, love and mid-life crisis, by Robert Fox

The third child is the eldest. Angela Fox told me once, when I was pregnant with child number three. "With the first, you put on too much pressure; the second is a rebel; but the third you just sort of bung in the world and leave alone. So the child grows up much the most relaxed and normal and enjoys himself."

Ever since then, having met Robert (who is charming), James (ditto) I have felt a curiosity about Robert, third and least-known Fox brother. "Robert has the best of the three and has the most intuitive thing, he is not half bad," Angela says. "And is more beautiful than the other two put together."

My mother is prone to rather sweeping statements, often but not always true. Robert says. He sees his Fox looks, beamed round glasses, and shout above the clashing at Conran's Mezzo in Wardour Street. "It's that easy. I did rebel, behaved badly away from home."

Really, it was the remarkable actress Angela, now alerted me to the fact that, now 44 and a solo theatre producer, she has made his name. A Month by the Sea, which opened on June 21, is based on a charming story, set in the and stars Vanessa Redgrave, Paul Scofield, Leslie

Grave, father of Michael, was Robert's godfather. As Angela has written, all her famous sons have, in turn, astonished and exasperated her with their fallings in and out of love and fame.

She was a giddy young thing herself once, daughter of "Glitters" Worthington, a doctor's wife, and the playwright Freddy Lonsdale. At RADA, she inspired Noel Coward's song *Don't Put Your Daughter On the Stage*. Mrs Worthington, as the Miss Worthington whose bust was definitely too developed for her age.

She never dreamt that her eldest son Edward would ever be able to act: William (known as James) was the one with natural talent — and he confounded everyone by abandoning his film fame to join the evangelical Christian group The Navigators.

When Robert was at Harrow, James seemed the pinnacle of glamour and the epitome of Swinging London. "He used to drive up to the school in summer in his purple Lotus Elan, the height of chic. It would annoy and impress the other boys in equal measure."

Robert could not understand his brother's defection. "I thought he was mad. He cut himself off from all of us and his past in a way that was inexplicable to those closest to him. And in doing so hurt a great many people. But it was obviously what he had to do. He was leaving one reality and creating another. And now he has come back, and he is a very strong family man, father of five and a very good dad."

Angela tells (in her memoir *Slightly Faxed*) of going to watch Robert playing cricket at Harrow one day. Bored by the cricket, she went indoors to watch Wimbledon in the housemaster's study. And on the television screen she saw, in the royal box next to Princess Marina, the unmistakable figure of her husband Robin. "Thus did I learn of his friendship with this elegant royal lady... I was the last woman in London to know."

Despite everything, the Fox parents stayed together for 35 years, until his death from cancer in 1971. "My father never flaunted his infidelity," Robert says. "It's my mother who has turned him into this famous Lothario."

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



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and last acting role, in Christopher Hampton's *When Did You Last See My Mother?* He found his own performance "embarrassing".

Instead he joined the impresario Michael White in producing a string of hits: *The Rocky Horror Show*, *A Chorus Line*, *Annie*; and also the occasional flop (*Corpus*, *The Sloane Ranger Revue*). "If you could bottle the alchemy that made a hit, nobody would ever do anything else. Until everything comes together on the first night, you really never know. It's utterly elusive, and scary, and unique. You open and close in a night, or run ten years."

He went solo in 1981: *Anyone For Denis?* Another *Country*, *License and Lounge*, and dozens more since. Turning to film production happened by chance when he ran into the writer Trevor Benthall, taking tea at the Waldorf with Nicholas Hytner and Nigel Hawthorne. Benthall told him about *A Month by the Lake*.

Fox read it and thought it ideal for his then mother-in-law, Vanessa: she suggested brother Edward to play opposite her — the obvious choice, as a repressed English major.

Having asked John Irvin to direct, Robert set about trying to raise the money in Britain. Hopeless. "The BBC and Channel 4 turned us down. God forbid," he says, "that they should back an old-fashioned romantic love story about people over the age of 50." It was Harvey Weinberg of Miramax (*Enchanted April*, *The Crying Game*, *My Left Foot*) who wrote the cheque. "So the chance of anyone making a profit out of it in this country vanishes."

Off they all went for eight weeks' shooting on Lake Como in May 1994. Luckily, al-

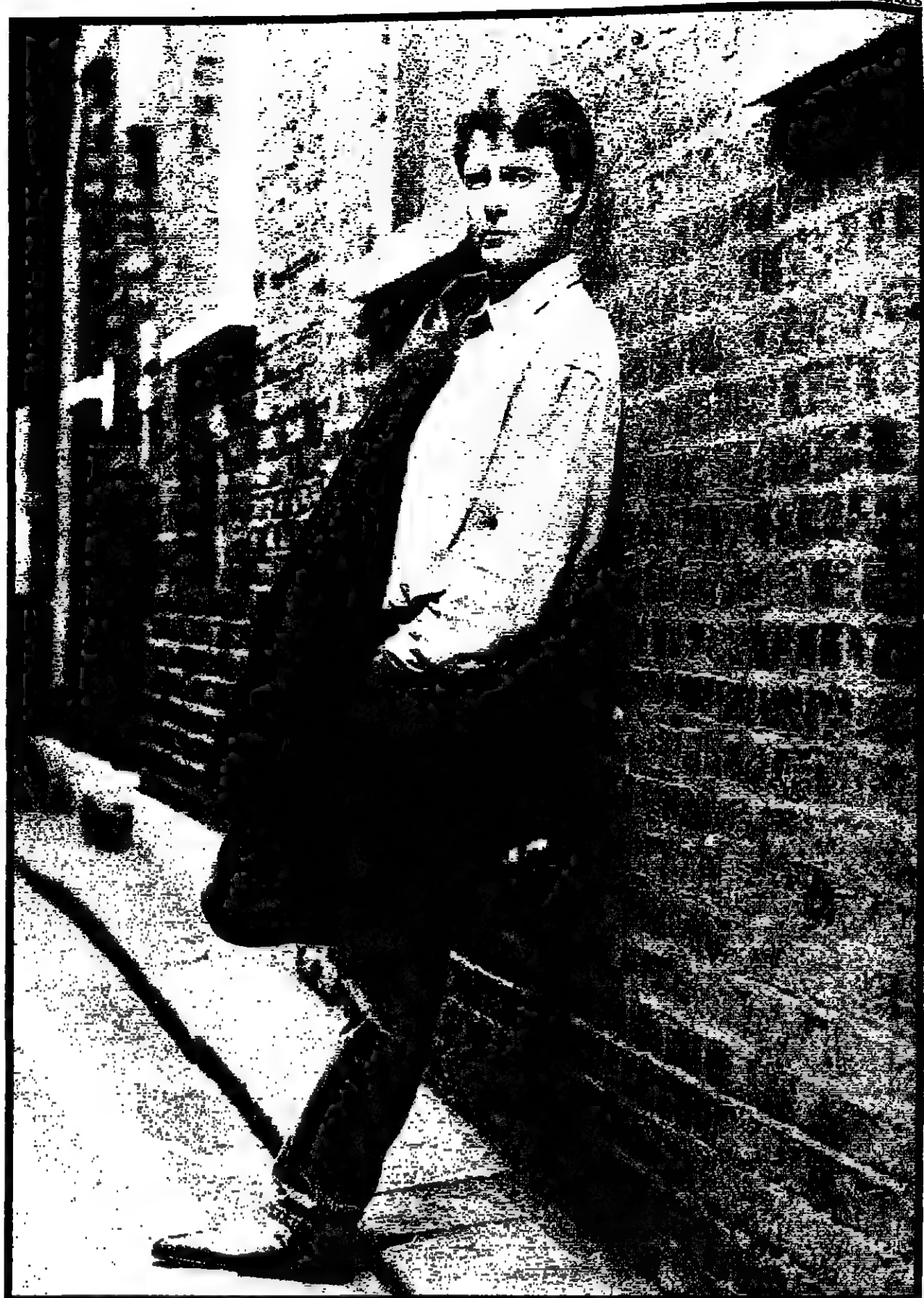
though Robert had by now separated from Natasha Richardson, he had remained friends with Vanessa. "And Natasha was getting married in America at the end of our schedule, and I had to be the one to tell Vanessa she couldn't go to the wedding because we were running out of time and money. She was, of course, totally professional about it."

Such is the kind of glorious muddle that the two most famous showbusiness dynasties must by now be accustomed to. Robert had left his first wife Celestia, mother of his children Chloe, Sam and Louisa, when he fell in love with Natasha Richardson while producing *The Seagull*. After three years together, they married, whereupon Natasha left him for Liam Neeson.

Robert was utterly distraught. He was in the midst of producing *The Importance of Being Earnest* with Maggie Smith. It was, he says, a classic mid-life crisis at the age

of 40, and he went to a psychotherapist. "I do recommend it. To talk to someone completely objective, not emotionally involved in your life, allows you to say things you would never say to a friend. It is very constructive." He was so impressed he went on into Freudian analysis "which lasted about three sessions. Lying on the bloody bed, not getting any response at all drove me absolutely mental. So that was that."

As he discovered, nothing makes you feel better about loss except finding someone else — which he did: Fiona Gelfar, *Vogue* contributing editor. They had first met when she was 17, but then met again at a weekend house-party. "I think it was 1994 — Joe was born in July 1995."



The third brother: Robert Fox has spent a life surrounded by theatre people and falling in and out of love and fame

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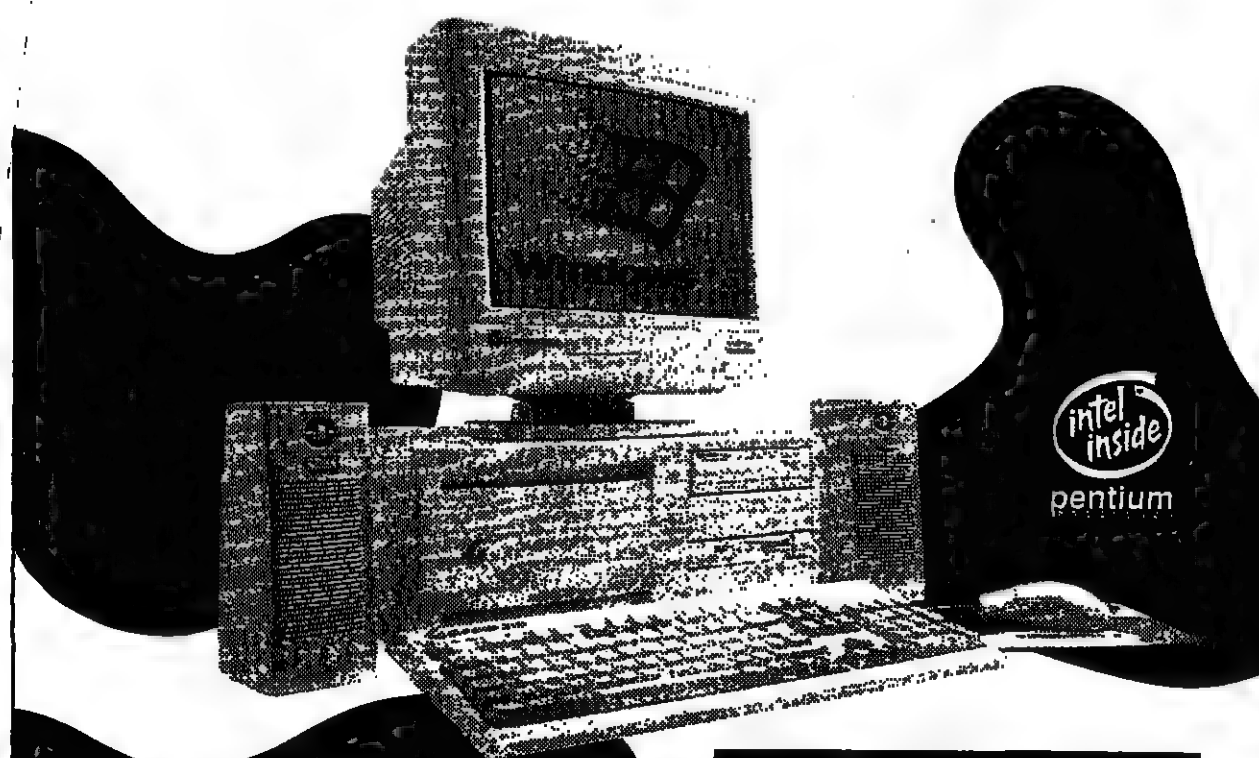
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INSIDE SECTION
2

Caitlin Moran on the teenage wonders carving up the pop charts
Arts, page 32

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Have I got *boos* for you

Wisps of that bluish hair protruded from the brim of his fedora but back at his room he discarded the hat to unveil a



"People are my pastime," said Crisp, though perhaps what he really meant was New York people, the madder the better. In the book he lists those he has met, from the Elton John impersonator to the local Hell's Angels. Henry "Al" Majette, who has spent

What it lacks is someone special. The Crisp diaries are devoid of expressions of love or appreciations of beauty. "I only know people superficially," Crisp said over lunch. It was the one time he appeared uneasy and he started to fiddle with his cutlery. "I only meet them in the street. I can't remember anybody and that is sad, because they want to be remembered. I think feelings are untrustworthy." Love was not something he recognised. It would be vulgar, letting oneself go, and that is not his thing. Here is a man who has never been properly drunk.

than my dressing gown." He pays \$75 a week for this dump. Surely he can afford better? If I knew I was going to die in three years I would move," he agreed. "But money is for saving, not spending." This was the opposite of his belief that life is for spending. Yet his books make money, he receives regular commissions to write and talk, and he has enough folding stuff to contemplate dividing his will among three nieces.

of all his clothes save his underpants, at which point a Filipino nurse entered and, with a Clint Eastwood snarl, said that she would have them, too.

Against such odds even the most valiant Englishman can wilt. Crisp describes the scene with verve, but the enduring image is of an old man, skinny and shivering and somehow, for all his bluster and repartee, really rather sad. After all the years the civil servant was again naked, and not happy in the slightest.

● **Resident Alien** — the New York Diaries, by *Quentin Crisp*, HarperCollins, £16.99, is published on June 30

THERE you were, thinking that maybe *Have I Got News For You* was finally becoming more watchable again after a couple of ho-hum guests such as the Saudi dissident Muhammad al-Masari, when along comes *Daily Mirror* Editor Piers Morgan with a performance so utterly embarrassing that you swore you would never miss another episode again. It was riveting.

ly, Hislop provides continuity with his humour and his losing streak.

But Allason will have a struggle to make us win more than Morgan did. After digging himself into an early hole by abusing his opponent, Hislop, his host, Deayton, and even his partner, Clive Anderson, Morgan carried on

digging like a demon. After a volley of flat jokes, the tabloid editor made the mistake of appealing directly to the studio audience to side with him.

Morgan side with him against *Private Eye* Editor Hishop. "Does anybody actually like him?" Morgan asked — rhetorically, he thought. It turned out that the audience did.

"A few people have tried to have a go before," says Colin Swash, the show's producer, "and after the first riposte they've scuttled for cover. So full marks to Piers for sticking to his guns."

Yes, give Morgan credit for being memorable. Teddy Taylor, wittering on humourlessly about Europe, almost made the so-bad-he's-good category, but many other guests are just forgettably disappointing — as QJ's publicist Max Clifford was when he partnered Eddie Izzard a fortnight ago.

PAULA YATES was infamously loud but also infamously unfunny: after her freshly boosted breasts were debated and denounced, she unwisely sought to salvage her self-esteem by calling Hislop "the sperm of the devil." It sank her. For what it's worth, Hislop's advice to potential guests is simply "be yourself."

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Philip Howard



■ The Beefiad: a bathetic of non-cooperation (Homer shakes his head)

Sing, Madam Speaker, the wrath of John Major. That accused anger that brought uncounted anguish on the Eurocrats of Brussels, and hurled down to the Hades of "general reserve" measures to reduce bureaucracy and other such multi-paragraphed protocols dear to the Gods of Eulympos. Though dangerously Utopian for their Myrmidons of Whitehall and Brussels, who make a meal of nothing but red tape from rosy-fingered dawn until silver-footed moonshine. First they cut the red tape into small pieces, then they wrap the guts around the small pieces as in a beefburger, then they kebab the pieces on their word-processors, so that the savoury smell rises up to high Heaven to please the Gods of the Commission. (Note the stock epic filler and the hexameter endings.)

With your Sister Muses, divine Betty, sing from the time of the first quarrel which divided Thomas Major-Ball's son, the lord of Tories, and godlike Santer. For like the Trojan War, the Beef War must have its epic band, in order that the deeds of its heroes are not forgotten on the eternal spike.

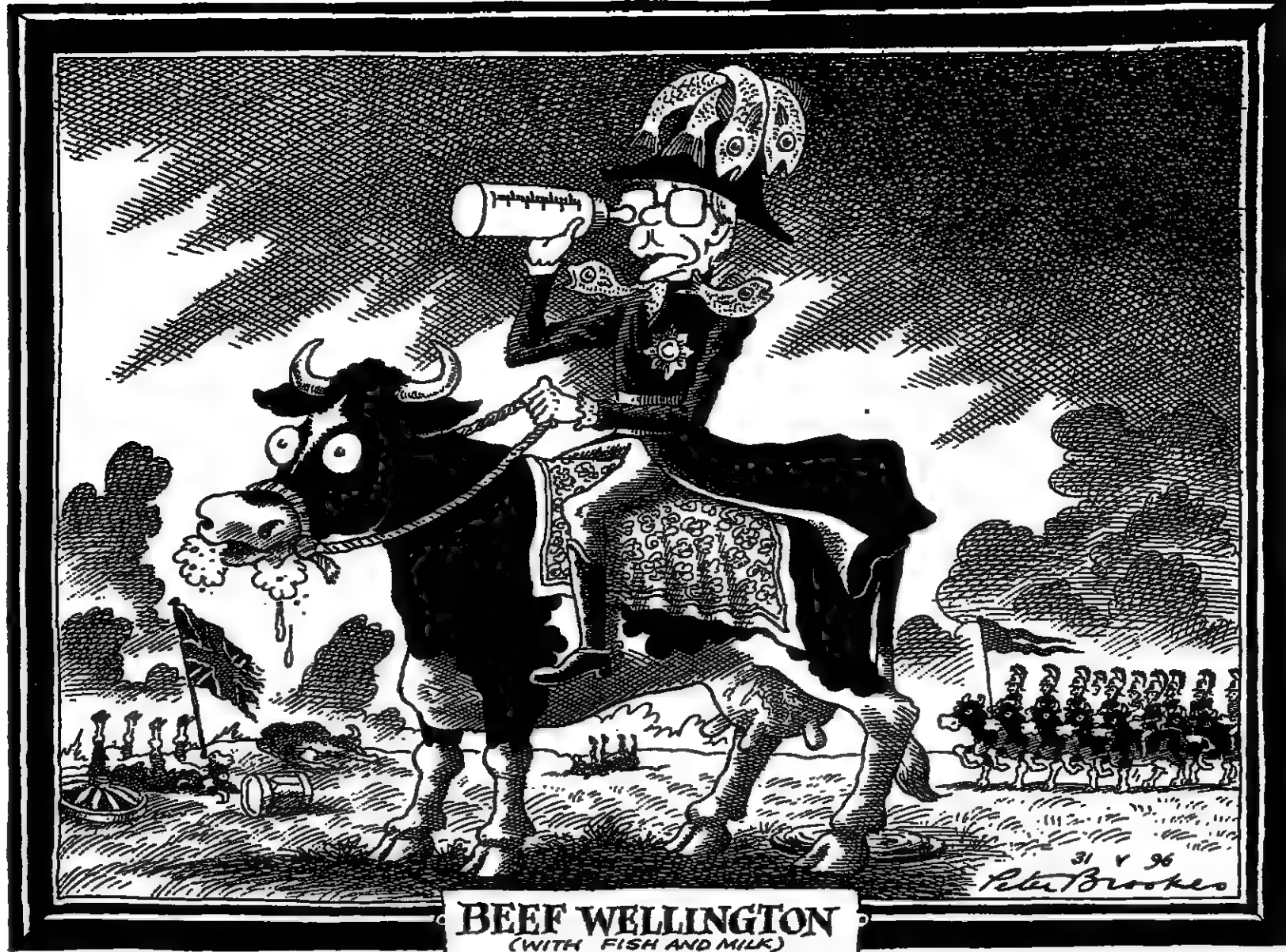
Which of the gods was it who set these two fighting? It was Zeus, the Lord of Eulympos, in the guise of a bull. For he it was who founded EU back at the beginning of time, many generations ago, and the generations of men are as the leaves. For he fell in love with Europa, the Princess of Tyre in the Lebanon. In order to win her (and to conceal his amour from his lady wife Hera) he took the form of a beautiful bull. And he played around Europa so gently that she climbed on his back, foolish virgin. Thereupon he ran off to the sea, and swam away bearing her to Crete, where she gave birth to those stern judges Minos and Rhadamanthus, and, some say, Jacques Delors himself. Hence all those tears shed. Hence all those protocols. Hence the EU.

Bull was the cause of the Beef War. Bull and the seed of bull. For as when a mighty bull, lord of the shambling herds, sees that the Europeans are refusing to honour his EU procreative semen, and takes umbrage, he tosses his shaggy head and looks askance with his red eyes. And the herdsmen and Eurocrats all tremble and hide behind their opt-out and quota-hoppers. So anger came over banana-footed John Major, lord of the Tories. His heart in his shaggy breast was torn in thought, whether to draw his sharp sword from beside his thigh, break up the Parliament, and kill all the beef bastards. Or to quell his anger and restrain his heart in a sulk to make them all sorry.

And so he retired to his tent behind the black door of Number Ten. And he summoned his War Cabinet of Malcolm Rifkind, Caledonian guest-advocate to strangers, and Roger Freeman, far the best of the co-ordinators of Britain's non-cooperation strategy. And John Major opened his mouth and spoke winged words to them: "Heroes and dear friends, I am now not inconsiderably totally livid with these foreigners. So I shall declare war on them, just like Lady Thatcher and the Falklands. Until they honour our beef and our bull's semen, our sacred tallow and gelatine, we are officially in a state of total non-cooperation with them. Oh yes. We shall non-cooperate in Brussels. We shall non-cooperate at ministerial meetings and assemblies of officials. We shall never surrender."

Just then came a sacred herald by fax from godlike Jacques Santer. And he spoke winged words: "Cease this foolish hostage-taking, John Major. What is sauce for the bull is sauce for the mad cow. We shall cut your fishing-fleet. And what is this about your lethal baby milk? As your sacred bard Samuel Johnson said: 'Truth, Sir, is a cow, which will yield such people [sceptics] no more milk, and so they have gone to milk the bull.' All Europeans, Britons included, are by pedigree sons and daughters of the bull. If we must declare cruel war that makes widows and orphans, can we not do it over something less communitaire to the seeds of Europe than bull's semen?"

The warriors of all the moos that fit to print may not seem as heroic as Achilles and Hector. But their bathetic should be told. And it could run to more than 24 books.



A slave state of our time

Southern Sudan is being laid waste
by the Khartoum Government — and
all in the name of a merciful God

Would you like a few dozen slaves for Christmas? Well, not Christmas exactly, because the people selling these goods are very down on Christmas and even more so on Christ. Moreover, the Christians very frequently are the slaves, and when they are, they are very likely to be tortured or murdered, and usually both. I should add that the slave-market is filled with men, women and children indiscriminately, and that those taken for slavery are used not only for the normal work of slavery, but for sexual services. Yes, yes, and yes again, I am talking about the horrors of Sudan, which may well at present hold the Blue Riband of savagery. (Christian sufferers are obliged to renounce their Christian names and adopt Muslim ones, but it must be understood that very many Muslims are also suffering at the hands of the savages of Khartoum.)

And when I call them savages, I am not exaggerating, as Abu Adam Abu Bakir Ormer would testify if he were in any state to do so:

He was imprisoned for three-and-a-half months... while there he was severely tortured. He was hung from the ceiling by his hands and legs and beaten with plastic ropes and sticks many times each day. He was also forced to lie naked in the scorching sun all day long on the roof of the house. While on the roof he was handcuffed with special handcuffs which tightened with movement, and he was forced by beating to keep rolling over, so that the handcuffs became increasingly tight, cutting off blood to the head. At other times he was tied to a table and his legs and feet were beaten so badly that he was unable to stand; they then beat him to make him keep running, saying it "was good for the circulation".

It is important to understand that such mad savagery is not the behaviour of some crazed loner. We are talking of a state — a terrible one, but one that would have to be recognised as such. Nor does that state lack a religion, and with terrible irony it calls itself Islamic although Muslims by the thousand are destroyed by those who have called themselves Muslims. We know, alas, what evil can do in the name of good, and throughout all recognisable time men (and women) have killed to demonstrate their holiness. But what do you do when you get the news of a troop-train which pauses to kill a considerable number of innocent and peaceable people? These visits

included raiding villages, killing, capturing and torturing civilians, burning homes and crops, looting and pillaging. And I repeat: these are not runamucks getting what they can until the forces of order arrive, they are the forces of order.

Nor does this madness stop or even pause; at least, if it isn't madness it is difficult to say what it is, as this *bulletin* might show — in the form of a letter (a real one). "In the name of God, the Merciful, Dear Outlaws, Peace be with you. We ask you to be alert for we are coming to you at Nyamell. Our force is 1,800 soldiers strong. We ask you to be prepared. You idiots. If you want peace you should surrender before July, at the latest. Commander P.D.F. Hebeid." The next day, casualties arrived at Nyamell.

But that was nothing to what happened next — and would be expected to happen. It was, of course, the selling and buying of human beings, particularly children. The current average price required to redeem a slave is three cows — with a minimum of two cows. The traders claim that this price is necessary to cover the costs of finding children, abduction for sometimes negotiating a purchase and bringing them back. It is estimated by the civil authorities that there are approximately 12,000 children from this area currently enslaved in the North, and that the numbers are growing, for raids are still continuing. Mind you, there are Good Samaritans (if the words aren't blasphemous), for an Arab trader said (and did) this:

The slave owners are Arabs of the Zabo tribe... and almost all of them are Muslim extremists. Since we reached a peace agreement with the Dinkas, I have brought back more than 300 children. Just a few days ago I brought back 12 children. Today I brought back 28. Some of the parents of these children will not be

able to pay the redemption fee. If the community leaders do not come up with the fee I will not be able to bring back more children. This work of returning slaves is dangerous for me. But I do it because I want the Arabs and the Dinkas to live in peace.

I dare say. And there are many who are working hard to bring them peace. One of them being Baroness Cox, the president of Christian Solidarity International. She has, with a very powerful team, brought to the world's attention the fact that sooner or later — more likely sooner — Sudan will be nothing but a charnel-house, where madness reigns and does not even know that it is mad.

The leaders of many savage places have claimed to be heading an ordered society, even though behind the facade there reigns nothing but anarchy. But in Sudan, conditions are far worse than anarchy. This is not the anarchy of a society that has broken into pieces (would that it were), but the anarchy of one bloodthirsty elite that has climbed to the top and cannot be dislodged.

This is not unique. Algeria has for many years now been in the same situation, and the Algerians are still losing huge numbers to the same dreadful fanatics. The fanatics have killed tens of thousands solely in order to create an Islamic state. As I have repeatedly asked: what kind of a religion can it be when its first action is to murder its own people? (I have also asked rather pertinently why the followers of the religions do not stand up and denounce the murdering leaders.)

In the case of Sudan, I am told that one-and-a-half million people have died in this terrible madness, and that five million have been displaced. In the case of Algeria, no one really knows how many have already died at the hands of the mad fanatics. That sea of blood must

have drowned countless hordes, but imagine tens of thousands being killed — not because the killers want to get even with some real or imagined hated ones, but to bring down the entire Algerian structure so that it can collapse and turn Algeria into a swamp of madness personified.

That is nothing but the plain truth; and it seems the structure that holds up any vestige of sanity in Sudan will hold until — well, I almost said until the mad ones have gone, but I fear that the mad ones will never go, after all, the mad ones in Algeria are still killing and they are still mad.

Madder, perhaps. Baroness Cox's conclusions are very thorough and terrible, and she knows more than anyone in this story. And that story says that what is happening in Sudan is — well, let Baroness Cox speak for herself. Read this, from her conclusions:

The Government's policy towards the people of the South and the Nuba mountains is tantamount to genocide, by means of terror, war, slavery, the mass displacement of the population and the manipulation of aid. In particular, widespread, systematic slavery continues on a large scale in government-controlled areas of Sudan. The raids by government troops and government-backed PDF militia against African towns and villages of the South and Nuba mountains are accompanied by atrocities, torture, rape, looting and destruction of buildings and property. Those not taken into slavery are generally killed and/or tortured.

In normal situations of hunger and violence, the world comes to the rescue or at least tries to do so. War, disease, theft — these are endemic, but by now the ways and means for helping to combat them are obvious. But what if that obvious remedy is deliberately refused — what then? For that, exactly, is what is happening in Sudan. Food and drink are available, but they are deliberately denied. Hunger is used as a weapon, and thousands of victims of the Government's genocidal plan rot and die. The UN itself has only limited access, and soon the Government will have its way entirely: millions are forced into migration and the Government will get its ultimate wish: enslavement with forced labour.

And that is the fate of the people who live and are murdered in Sudan: terror, slavery; at the end, genocide. It all began with human rights, but what can we do against savages who literally do not know the meaning of those words?

Bernard Levin

Pegged hopes

VICTORY for Binyamin Netanyahu in the Israeli elections will add a syrupy dollop of showbusiness to Middle Eastern politics.

"Bibi the Jaw", as Netanyahu is sometimes known, takes his personal image very seriously indeed. He is possessed of immaculate suits, steely gaze, and a polished quote for every occasion. Perfection, however, has its price.

Working as Israel's chief spokesman to the foreign press during the Gulf War, Netanyahu would always carry two clothes pegs in his pockets. When the time came to appear on television, he would ensure first that he was sitting on the tall of his jacket, so that his thick neck protruded bullishly from his suit.

Then he would produce the clothes pegs and fasten the front corners of his jacket to the seat so as to make himself look less stocky. So absurd did one ITN crew find Netanyahu's rituals that they spent the duration of the interview sobbing as they choked back their laughter. Netanyahu, a prime example of the excessively vain womanising politician, was not amused.

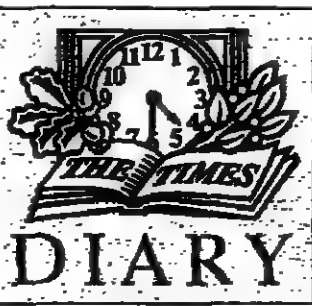
"It was funny at the time," said

one of the ITN crew yesterday. "But really we should have realised after all that preening he was prime ministerial material."

■ In organising a surprise party for the comic and farcure Ray Cooney, to celebrate his 64th birthday yesterday and half a century in showbusiness, somebody missed a trick. "There's going to be a surprise party for me," he told me. "Somebody forgot and said: 'See you on Thursday.' But don't worry, I shall



Netanyahu, Israel's peacock



make sure I keep my eyebrows up. A very useful tip that."

Party peace

AFTER months of dithering, Oxford University's Bullingdon Club has called off its reunion ball because of lack of interest. To recap, the Bullingdon, which represents Oxford's Krug-swinging tendency, had fallen into foreign hands. The original plan was to hold a £120-a-head ball at the Natural History Museum, inviting all old members, from Lord Rothschild to Darius Guppy.

The museum, however, quickly decided against submitting their dinosaur exhibits to the inevitable drunken caveman impressions. So the Bullingdon quietly moved its ball to the Imperial War Museum. Now, Clifford Potter, the American graduate in charge of the club,

has sent out letters returning the few deposited cheques he has received, citing lack of interest and shortage of contact addresses as his main obstacles. Potter, however, is no quitter. He is planning a ball for next summer which will be "so well remembered that decades pass before anyone contemplates another Buller reunion."

■ Congratulations to Melanie McGrath, 32, who picked up the £5,000 John Llewellyn Rhys Prize yesterday for her first novel *Motel Nirvana*, a tale of her 13,000-mile solo journey around the American desert. The money should come in handy. "I flew in this morning from Las Vegas," she said, "where I blew \$300 last night at the casino. I won't be gambling this away."

Hot spot

TOP OF any list of alternative holiday ideas should be Mihama, a town in western Japan littered with nuclear power stations. Local officials, assigned the fiendish task of promoting their few assets, have quite understandably resorted to desperate measures.

They sent a batch of posters featuring the town's "crystal beach" to travel agents throughout Japan. Anyone familiar with Mihama, however, would have noticed that something was missing. The tour-

ist board had been busy with the airport. Gone were the expressionist lines of the ghastly nuclear power plant. In their place were scenes of lush greenery, fields and forest. Confronted, the Mihama proved difficult to argue with. "We merely deleted what was unsuitable for a photograph whose aim is to show off beautiful scenery," explained an official.

Hay ho!

TOMORROW night sees another stage in the return to normal life of Salman Rushdie. He will be ap-



"Let's get away somewhere friendly. France perhaps?"

pearing at the *Sunday Times* Hay Literary Festival. Special Branch have done their nosing around, but Hay-on-Wye, fortunately for Rushdie, has less of the souk about it than most places.

He will be taking part in a debate on the motion "Europe should resist the culture of America", and will be arguing alongside the New Yorker writers Sidney Blumenthal and Adam Gopnik — opposing the motion.

The proposers come from a *Sunday Times* team, led by the journalist Bryan Appleyard and Oxford's Professor of Modern History, Norman Stone.

Rushdie's fondness for American culture was apparently stoked during the nervous months after the Iranians first called down their *fatwa*, when he used to stay up late watching American talk shows on satellite television.

■ Friends of Sarah Hoskins, 23, the daughter of Bob Hoskins from his first marriage, maintain that the actor is not all he pretends. Throughout her years at university, say those who shared her house, the star of British Telecom's "It's good to talk" advertisements preferred to communicate with her by other means — anything but the telephone.

P.H.S

Labour's loyalty bonus

Sarah Baxter on

Robin Cook, the

wily Euro-sceptic

It is only a beef war, not a shooting war. The British forces on the Rhine have not yet been mobilised, to my knowledge, against the Germans. Usually, the Government briefs the Opposition only when national security is at stake or our servicemen are deployed abroad. The last time Robin Cook met a Conservative Foreign Secretary for formal talks was when Douglas Hurd was in the job and the Bosnian ceasefire was close to agreement. Nevertheless, Malcolm Rifkind has written to Mr Cook telling him that he would be delighted to keep the Opposition fully informed.

Mr Rifkind and Mr Cook were debating society rivals at school and at Edinburgh University, but no doubt the old sparring partners would sagely agree that the national interest must come before party advantage. The Foreign Secretary is not going to consult Mr Cook about precisely what he intends to veto at the Council of Ministers, as Labour has demanded, but he and his shadow will jaw-jaw about the Euro-war. Thus Mr Rifkind hopes to demonstrate that the Government's stance on beef is noble and high-minded, rather than a feeble response to pressure from Tory Euro-sceptics. For its part, Labour has even more to gain. By adopting a bipartisan position, Mr Cook hopes to neutralise the issue and stop the Tories' jingoism from translating into votes.

The *Times*'s MORI poll suggests that Labour's tactic is working. Beef does not seem to be a swing issue on the doorstep. Mr Cook will regard that as a personal victory. But the policy of non-cooperation with the EU has an added bonus for him. For years, the Shadow Foreign Secretary has been a repressed Euro-sceptic, antagonised by the prospect of a "bankers' Europe" and the deflationary conditions of the Maastricht treaty. At last, he has been able to break free of his shackles and tell the EU to get stuffed — if only with our beef.

Tony Blair's pro-European friends feel understandably betrayed. Only last year the Labour leader's shiny new version of Clause Four of the party constitution was unveiled. It not only dumped nationalisation, but enshrined for the first time "a commitment to cooperate in European institutions". This was supposed to be a moment of sweet victory, with Labour's Euro-enthusiasts triumphing decisively over the party's sceptics. It is certainly galling for devoted federalists to watch Mr Blair renege so soon on his own constitution. But there is broad agreement in the party about beef and related Euro-matters that has rarely been achieved since Britain entered the Common Market.

It would be a mistake to believe that Labour's historic split has disappeared. Mr Blair is close to Roy Jenkins, as Michael Cockerell's recent television profile of the former SDP leader revealed. It was Mr Jenkins and his band of Labour rebels who helped Ted Heath to take the country into the EEC in 1972 to the fury of a young hot-head, soon to be a backbencher and now the Shadow Foreign Secretary. Later, support for Britain's membership was a key reason for the breaking away of the SDP. During the 1980s, converting Labour into a pro-European party, safe for defectors and deserting voters, became one of the chief goals of modernisers like Mr Blair.

Despite their very different views on Europe, Mr Blair and Mr Cook have been able to agree. The Left, for whom Mr Cook is the spiritual leader, is usually quick to criticise Mr Blair for backing the Tories in me-too fashion. But since the Left also has strong Euro-sceptic tendencies, there is a coincidence of interests here. As for the modernisers, they have temporarily abandoned Euro-philia in order to counter the image fostered by the Left during the wilderness years that Labour can always be counted on to side unpatriotically with the enemy. So everyone can now happily wage war.

The alliance rests on shaky foundations, because what the Left likes about Europe is less attractive to the modernisers, including Mr Blair — and vice versa. Mr Cook and most of the Labour Party eventually came to accept British membership of the Community because of the carrot of its social dimensions, in particular the social chapter, with its minimum workers' rights. This made the monetarist Maastricht treaty much easier to swallow.

By contrast, the Labour leader is not bothered by the stringent conditions for a single currency, since they might help him in power to keep inflation and spending under control. He is much more worried about whether the electorate can stomach the implied loss of sovereignty. Nor is he particularly sold on the social chapter, which is one of those embarrassing negative factors, like the minimum wage, which the Tories intend to exploit at the general election. The new line on the social chapter, deployed this week in connection with the launch of Labour's policy document *A Business Agenda for Europe*, is that Britain should opt in, but only to stop our European partners from adopting too many crazy expensive, pro-worker policies. Were the social chapter not so crucial to keeping the Left and the unions happy, the policy might have been binned.

Labour's Euro-enthusiasts and sceptics have little in common except the desire not to stick their necks out on any given European controversy. That unity may not be sustained for long, based as it is on the politics of the lowest common denominator. But it works for now — and for Mr Blair and Mr Cook, that is all that counts.



LIKUD'S OPPORTUNITY

Israelis still want peace, but with security

In defiance of expectations, Americans and exit polls, it appears that Benjamin Netanyahu has emerged, by a tiny majority, as the Prime Minister of Israel. If so, he faces a divided and polarised society which is reflected in a Knesset considerably more fragmented than that which sat previously.

A new electoral system designed to strengthen the Prime Minister and weaken the smaller parties has, perhaps predictably, failed to deliver. Mr Netanyahu can form a government, but it will of necessity be a patchwork coalition of his own Likud block combined with assorted religious and immigrant parties. While this blurs his personal mandate, it does not take it away.

Security concerns have completely dominated this contest and explain why Mr Netanyahu ultimately defeated the vastly more experienced Shimon Peres. This overwhelming concentration has been a surprise to many observers. The national economy which has performed spectacularly well over the past three years — in large part because of the easing of Israel's international isolation — did not register with many voters.

The assumption of many outside the country that peace must mean progress, and therefore benefit Labour, was badly flawed. It ignored the collective experience of the Jewish people for whom peace at any price has a very low premium. It also disregarded the reality that for many the period since the Oslo accords has seen more, not less violence. In under three years 217 Israeli citizens have died and some 1,000 been wounded in terrorist attacks. Allowing for population size, this would represent nearly 3,000 killed and 14,000 maimed in Britain — the whole Ulster experience over a 30-month

timetable. Were that to have happened here, Britons would make security the major election issue too.

Security, however, is a broader matter than mere overt force. This is what Mr Netanyahu has to ponder as he looks at the message his countrymen have sent him. The Likud leadership was careful to avoid the wholesale assault on the Oslo inheritance urged by some in its wings such as Ariel Sharon. It has fully embraced reconciliation with Jordan, whose leadership in turn was less than strikingly for Peres in the campaign. While it has reserved the right to pursue terrorist suspects inside the area which is now the Palestinian National Authority, it has fallen short of an absolute pledge to do so. Hostility to Mr Arafat has been muted, at least overtly.

While Likud is staunchly opposed to a Palestinian state, this does not preclude movement on both the political and economic fronts which allows for increased autonomy short of statehood. Even if Labour had won, it is doubtful that complete nation status would or could have been granted in the space of one parliamentary term. In short, predictions that peace prospects are dead may be highly premature. The process may advance at a different pace, choose new priorities, and give greater emphasis to the personal security of Israeli citizens, but that represents change rather than closure.

Mr Netanyahu has had very limited experience in government. He has built his career mainly on his exceptional presentation skills. If he establishes himself as Israel's Prime Minister, he will have to lead his country into unknown territory. He will have a mandate to negotiate from strength. He should use it.

PRIMARY LESSONS

Blunkett's theory is excellent; the practice would be harder

Parents agonise far more about the choice of a secondary than a primary school. Yet give a school a child to the age of 11, and it can forge the likely contours of the rest of the pupil's life. If the basic skills of reading, writing and maths are not instilled early, they are often never mastered at all. Unable to cope with the rigours of secondary school, pupils with low literacy levels tend to lose heart, play truant and, all too often, turn to crime. The standard of teaching in primary schools therefore casts ripples that penetrate far into society.

David Blunkett, Shadow Education Secretary, seems to appreciate this. In a robust speech to the National Association of Head Teachers' conference yesterday, he produced some sensible thinking about how to raise standards for primary school children. Like Chris Woodhead, Chief Inspector of Schools, he believes that the progressive revolution in teaching has gone too far, and it is time for a return to the traditional methods that our continental competitors never thought of abandoning.

Thus, reading should mainly be taught by sounding out letters (the method known as phonics). The principles of mathematics should be taught to classes as a whole, not left for children to "discover". Pupils should be grouped by ability; discipline should be asserted; at least half an hour's homework a night should be given to all children from the age of seven.

Most parents would consider these proposals to be no more than common sense. But many teachers, led astray by decades of dogma at teacher training college and beyond, still see them as contentious. The impact of ineffective teaching methods has been not just on children. The whole country has suffered: in today's World Economic Forum rankings, Britain comes only 35th out of 48 countries for an education system

which meets the needs of a competitive economy. Should he reach office, Mr Blunkett will find himself subject to all the frustrations that have beset countless Tory Education Secretaries and Mr Woodhead himself. Knowledge of what constitutes good teaching practice is one thing; persuading teachers to adopt it is another.

League tables have been a spur, although they have come slowly to primary schools. Mr Blunkett proposes to go further than current plans. He wants all children tested at five, and then assessed annually against the level that they ought to be achieving. This would give parents added ammunition against teachers or schools that they believe to be allowing their children to coast or fall behind. Pupils whose ability diverges some way from the average, whether above or below it, would be given individual education plans to ensure that they get special help. This is currently all too hard to achieve for able children in the state system. And schools themselves would have to set targets for improvement each year. By the end of two Labour terms, Mr Blunkett's ambition is that all primary school leavers without special needs should have a reading age of at least 11.

Mr Blunkett recognises that at the core of the problem is teacher training. The biggest educational scandal of this Government is that it has allowed teacher training colleges, for the past 17 years, to continue to turn out teachers who have not been taught how to teach. But even if Mr Blunkett improves teacher training, the vast mass of practitioners will still be of the old persuasion. He is right to acknowledge that results would come only slowly. He may be surprised, even then, to find how difficult it is to transform a prevailing philosophy that is so deeply embedded in the educational establishment.

TO THE MANOR PAWNED

Empty titles should go to people with full wallets

The upper classes may no longer have the upper hand but several of them have discovered nice little earners. When the last silver cow creamer has been pawned and the ormolu clock auctioned, any earl who is down to his last sovereign and any marquess who finds himself in Queer Street can now sell titles to keep their seats from crumbling.

Proper peerages may not be sold by their owners, but lordships of the manor may be offered on the open market as freely as crockery at a car-boot sale. Lordships of the manor convey no right to a seat in the House of Lords let alone *Le Caprice*, nor indeed to style oneself a peer. These cracked and dusty baubles, hangovers from a feudal age, bestow little more than rights to graze or hold a market on land long built over. There is the chance for those hungry for honour to style themselves John Snooks, Lord of Crinkly Bottom: but to hold such a title is to be no more elevated than Count Basesy, Duke Ellington or a Baron Knight.

Both Bristol and Spencer have put manorial titles up for auction and seen them excite those anxious to acquire a whiff of gentility. Our great houses are unbundling their inheritance in the manner of an asset stripper towards a bloated conglomerate. But it is perhaps reassuring in this age that some moneyed people still feel the need to swathe themselves, if not in ermine, then in a patch of almost-aristocratic purple.

The title of Lord of the Manor developed in medieval times to mark the man who

exercised *droit de seigneur* over a hamlet from the comfort of his bijou moor and bailey home. Over time, however, the *seigneur* has lost most of his *droits*. In 1660 Lords of the Manor were deprived of their rights of wardship; this can be seen as one of the first occasions when meddling legislators strangled a flourishing trade with regulation — in this case the market in orphans and foundlings. Manorial titles still empowered their holders with the right to charge a nominal rent of their vassals until 1922, when, some fifty years after serfdom was abolished in England, happily for traditionalists, it survives in Scotland along with much else that is mourned elsewhere such as quarter-gill measures in out-of-the-way pubs and top quality tap water to dilute them.

The market in manorial titles only really took off after the Second World War, following the decline of the flourishing baronial bourse of Lloyd George and Baldwin. When seats in the Upper House could less easily be sold under the counter, collectors moved to lesser fare. Most manorial titles are now acquired by the newly rich, incensing some of the less newly rich who see standards declining. But it was ever thus. In 1439 and 1462 laws were passed to prevent the sale of manorial titles to new money types such as the Fitzalan-Howards. The ultras may shudder, but better by far that the rising bourgeois acquire status than a taste for revolution.

Nationalism and the viability of devolution in Britain

From Mr John Papworth

Sir, Those who, like Matthew Parris (articles, May 20, 27; letters May 28), are worried about the economic viability of small nations resulting from devolution, as well as those who assume that greater integration in Europe is the high road to economic progress, might do worse than reflect on figures issued by *The Economist* which indicate that 25 of the top 25 of the richest nations measured in terms of GDP have populations of less than ten million.

They may also care to ponder why it is that among the poorest of the poor are the giant US ranks lower than any of the Scandinavians, despite the fact that its population is almost 50 times greater than that of Norway.

With respect,
JOHN PAPWORTH (Editor),
Fourth World Review,
24 Abercorn Place, NWS,
May 28.

From the President of the Scottish National Party

Sir, Is not Matthew Parris, in denouncing the "parochialism" of Scottish nationalism, being supremely parochial himself when he denies the will of the Scots to establish more fulfilling international relations with our European partners? Victoria's empire is dead, Mr Parris, the marriage has soured and England is turning into a small-minded spent force in Europe in front of our eyes.

Why can't the English just accept that the current components of the UK could wield much greater collective force in Europe with two, three or even four seats in the Council of Ministers instead of only one?

I share Mr Parris's belief that a United States of Europe is not on the cards; but, having made the transition from Westminster to Europe some 21 years ago, I am equally convinced that Britain's carping Euro-scepticism is a much more damaging, destructive and diminishing force than the par-

ish-pump parochialism he may find at Scottish Question Time in the Commons (a product of our Westminster system).

If Mr Parris doubts this, let him come with me to Strasbourg, Brussels or Luxembourg to witness the full horror of British parochialism in action and the full glory of positive small nations like Ireland, Belgium, Finland, The Netherlands, Austria and Luxembourg.

Yours sincerely,
WINIFRED M. EWING
(President, Scottish National Party),
European Parliament,
Strasbourg.

From Mr Donald Winterton

Sir, Matthew Parris's criticism of small nations in Europe is antediluvian.

"Parochial" need no longer have negative connotations. Today, with global travel and instant communications, life within a parish need never feel stifling, and the reintroduction of strong parishes into our cities is what our society most needs.

Now is it the small nations of Europe which are "uncivilising, diminishing, childish" — the European countries that come top in quality-of-life surveys are always the small ones, such as Denmark and Switzerland, and some of the soaring achievements of European civilisation, such as the works of Leonardo da Vinci and Bach, arose from the modest city states within Italy and Germany. It was only when these principalities were united, often by force, that we had world wars and global forms of economic collapse.

Yours faithfully,
DONALD WINTERTON,
Wardrobes House Cottage,
Nr Princes Risborough,
Buckinghamshire.

From Mr A. G. Luscombe

Sir, Matthew Parris is right to fear the possible rise of English nationalism as a result of political devolution in the UK.

Investment in Burma

From Mr Nicholas Mellor

Sir, Whilst I endorse your leader of May 27, urging people to shun holidays in Burma in order not to provide foreign exchange for the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and tacitly endorse the oppressive regime, such action is not enough.

Revenue from British tourists pales in comparison with the growing investment in Burma by some of its neighbouring countries. In 1994 over \$500 million was received from Singapore and Thailand.

Should human rights in Burma not be higher on our agenda in relations with members of Asean (Association of South East Asian Nations) which have investment programmes in the country?

Currently there is a major project to build a pipeline taking natural gas from the Yadana natural gas field in the Andaman Sea overland across

The English are not nationalists, *per se*, in their relationship with the home nations as they are, say, with Brussels or as the Scots are towards them. They are happy enough with a government containing members of all the home nations, and including a non-English Prime Minister, while all remain under one common loyalty. If, however, the Scots and Welsh wish to have a divided loyalty then the English may well become as narrowly nationalistic as they are and then the United Kingdom could disintegrate.

Yours,
A. G. LUSCOMBE,
24 Academy Court,
Castle Street, Irvine, Ayrshire,
May 28.

From Mr Evan Davies

Sir, How heartening to read Matthew Parris's criticism of the nationalism of small nations, masquerading as European regionalism. English nationalism, when it finds its full force in the context of European regionalism and of the devolution of power to Scotland and Wales, will in my view be one of the nastiest in Europe.

The nationalism of big nations has been so much more dangerous than that of small ones. The history of our century shows the horrors that big-nation nationalism can bring.

Perhaps a future of small nations, whatever its unpleasantness, would be preferable.

Yours faithfully,
EVAN DAVIES,
118 Plymouth Road,
Penarth, South Glamorgan.

From Mr William M. Ballantine

Sir, More power to the elbow of Matthew Parris. People down south must wake up to the implications for them of Labour's devolution plans; our whole British heritage is at stake.

Yours faithfully,
W. M. BALLANTINE,
47 The Quarryknives,
Dean Road, Bonness, West Lothian,
May 28.

Burma to Thailand. Its benefits to the development of the region will be enormous, but large swathes of forest are being cut down to make way for the pipeline and villagers in the region have been used as forced labour.

The leaders of the Karen people have called for a boycott of this pipeline, which is being built with the aid of Unocal and Total SA and is one of the few issues on which the West may be able to influence a regime that is well used to isolationism.

The Burma that travellers may find when democracy is restored will be very different from that today. In recent offensives the SLORC regime has virtually wiped out the minority groups such as the Karen and their voice, already weak, may soon be silent for ever.

It is not just the tourists that should heed the words of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS MELLOR,
37 Peel Street, W8,
May 27.

Frogspawn blight

From Ms Sarah Heath

Sir, Sadly, reports of abnormality and arrested development in frogspawn (letter, May 28) are becoming increasingly common in the UK. Amphibians are declining worldwide, with pollution (including acid rain), habitat loss and climate change thought to be the major factors.

This spring large numbers of breeding adult frogs were killed off by the cold snap. However, as your correspondent points out, it seems unlikely that cold weather could account for the abnormal spawn he has spotted in the West Highlands.

Scientists from the National Amphibian Survey at Cardiff University are this year investigating the possible reasons behind the decline in frogs, helped by Wildlife Watch, the junior branch of The Wildlife Trusts.

Our nationwide survey — Bts Frogwatch — asks young people to list where and when they see frogspawn, tadpoles and emerging frogs. The project has even received reports of spawn in flowing water — possibly the result of a lack of suitable breeding ponds. Results will be compared with data from our 1985 survey.

By the end of this year, thanks to observant young people, scientists may have built up a clearer picture of what

is happening to our frogs and be able to further explore the reasons for their decline.

Yours faithfully,
SARAH HEATH
(Education Officer),
Wildlife Watch, Witham Park,
Waterside South, Lincoln,
May 28.

From Mr Michael J. Mitchell

Sir, My experience here in Gloucestershire has been somewhat different to that of your West Highlands correspondent. The frogspawn, while late, was of the same colour and size as before but it did seem to break up more quickly than usual, becoming very stringy, and certainly the number of tadpoles was very sharply down and they don't seem to be maturing very fast, and the mature frogs are not as visible on the surface as usual.

There are reports locally of dead frogs in some ponds, but other ponds have had a good year. Friends high in Somerset saw lots of frogspawn amid ice and snow earlier this year, long before mine came, so it doesn't seem that temperature is a factor either.

Yours sincerely,
M. J. MITCHELL,
11 Chestnut Terrace, Charlton Kings,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire,
May 28.

Heal thyself

From Mrs Sandie Taylor

Sir, I have conclusive proof that some of us really do come from different planets. My husband and his four partners have just received a directive from the Health and Safety Executive that they must have a first-aid kit and a trained first-aid-er on the premises. They are five full-time GPs working with six nurses in a well equipped building.

My own feeling is that they should toss a packet of Elastoplast into the defibrillator box and paint a red cross on it. This should cover most eventualities.

Yours faithfully,
SANDIE TAYLOR,
5 Griston Road,
Thorpington, Thetford, Norfolk,
May 28.

Export of paintings

From the Duke of Beaufort

Sir, I support strongly Mr J. W. T. Martin's plea (letter, May 27) that consent should not be refused to export works of art by living artists. Since the initial ruling concerning Lucian Freud's *The Painter's Room*, the picture has been locked by its owner in a vault where the public are unable to enjoy it. Unless the ruling is lifted it may remain out of sight for many years.

It must be a regressive step to prevent free movement of such works of art.

Yours faithfully,
BEAUFORT,
Marlborough Fine Art
(London) Ltd,
6 Albemarle Street, W1,
May 29.

Moon myths and the Great Wall

From Professor Alec Eden

Sir, We are undoubtedly amused by Gaza's refusal to be impressed "when told that of all man's work on Earth, it alone [the Great Wall of China] could be seen from the Moon" (leading article, May 23). But what is the basis for this popular belief or its more modest, but less precise, version of the wall being "visible from space"?

At the end of the 1980s I was closely concerned with the preparation for ultrasonic measurements of blood flow in the brains of orbiting astronauts in the space shuttles *Discovery* (twice) and *Atlantis*. In my conversations with many crew members upon their return, I could not find one who claimed to have viewed the world's most distinctive monument from a height of some 180 miles, although several had specifically attempted to do so. The chances of seeing it from the Moon — at an altitude of over 1,300 times greater — would appear to be remote.

Is this an example of a modern myth?

Yours faithfully,
ALEC EDEN,
The Thatched House,
Mead Road, Torquay, Devon,
May 23.

From Mr I. McBain

Sir, The idea that the Great Wall of China can be seen from the Moon is, as I understand it, as probable as someone in London being able to see a school ruler held aloft in Newcastle.

Yours faithfully,
IAN MCBAIN,
76 Kingston Road, Poole, Dorset,
May 23.

Tories and Christianity

From the Bishop of Willesden

Sir, Your Diary of May 21 quotes me as saying: "Britain needs Christianity a hundred times more than it needs Conservatism." These words, although I do not disagree with them, are not mine. They come from an article in *The Church of England Newspaper* by Harry Greenway, MP, the same man who, in the *Evening Gazette*, has claimed that "Jesus was certainly a Conservative".

If Jesus had lived today he would certainly not have been a Conservative. He would have pointed out what was wrong in all the political parties and in the Church as well. But he would still have loved us, in spite of our self-interest.

Yours sincerely,
IGRAHAM WILLESDEN,
173 Willesden Lane, NW6,
May 24.

Road rage

From Mr John White

Sir, I frequently experience road rage (letters, May 25), directed at whoever conceived this euphemism for criminality and those who perpetuate its use.

Perhaps they subconsciously recognise that by condoning and contributing to excessive and increasing dependence on the car they create a climate in which violence finds a bogus excuse.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WHITE,
Highfield, 14 Lancaster Avenue,
Hadley Wood, Hertfordshire,
May 29.

Please hold...

From Mr Nigel Rodgers

Sir, Mr John du Bois (letter, May 22; see also letters, May 13, 16) is just one among millions who ought to be forced to listen to piped music while waiting on the telephone. What is obviously needed is a device which allows people to choose the sort of music (if any) they want on the line by pressing, say, star for silence, one for Mozart, two for Madonna, three for Mantovani — and so on.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL RODGERS
(Honorary Secretary),
Pipedown
(The Campaign against Piped Music),
6 Kingsley Mansions, W14,
May 23.

From Dr J. D. Gunner

Sir, Telephone queuing is annoying, but at least the aim is courtesy. What sticks in my old-fashioned gut is having a transaction with a shopkeeper interrupted by his answering the telephone.

Yours faithfully,
J. D. GUNNER,
Hawkshead Hill Farm,
Ambleside, Cumbria,
May 24.

Some sunny day

From Mr Anthony Martin

Sir, I suspect there will be a renaissance of Vera Lynn songs to bolster our morale on the BSE battlefield. Might I suggest that a rendering of "Well meet again" would provide a significant boost both to our hopes and our expectations.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY MARTIN,
Whitstone House,
Whitstone, Exeter, Devon,
May 30.

Business letters, page 27

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

OBITUARIES

JEREMY SINDEN

Jeremy Sinden, actor, died on May 29 from cancer aged 45. He was born on June 14, 1950.

JEREMY SINDEN specialised in playing eccentric military men and overgrown public schoolboys. They were the sort of Woodhousean buffoons which in clunker hands might have lapsed into caricature.

His last incarnation, a role which he was born to play, was as Toad of Toad Hall, that motoring terror of the English countryside. Thousands of theatregoers flocked to see Alan Bennett's adaptation of *Wind in the Willows* at the Old Vic, and in particular Sinden's masterful Toad, resplendently dressed in striped blazer and Frank Muir-style bow-tie. *The Times* reviewer described Sinden as "a nice smug Toad, who wears everything down to his convicts' arrows like a model on a Paris catwalk".

Sinden was not just a children's actor. Apart from Toad, he was perfectly cast as Goring in Wilde's *The Ideal Husband* and as Major Swindon in Shaw's *The Devil's Disciple*. His theatre experience ranged from Shakespeare to West End farce. There was also a good deal of television work. If there was a theme to his work, it lay in his talent for comedy. He had the impressively large physique, and open, mobile features which naturally lend themselves to farce.

Sinden was a popular man in the business. He had a delightful, unstuffy sense of humour. In one long run of *Follow the Star* at Chichester, he had been suffering from a cold, and had smothered himself with Vick's VapoRub. He was highly amused to notice that the unfortunate dancers on stage, who followed in his wake, had tears streaming down their faces. Henceforth he became known backstage as "Old Vick".

Jeremy Sinden came from distinguished acting stock. He was the son of Donald Sinden, who had made his own reputation as an actor in light-hearted film roles in the 1950s. Jeremy grew up feeling that he had to share his father like a piece of "public property" with the rest of the world. He and his brother Marc learnt the necessity of being "on duty" and well-behaved on family outings. Initially Jeremy had no ambition to follow his glamorous parent into acting. It was only later in childhood, after watching Anthony Quayle in *The Guns of Navarone*, that he realised that a leading man did not have to look particularly handsome, and that he therefore stood a chance in the profession himself.



The English master at Lancing, where he went to school, hardly helped. He told Sinden that he could be in the school play because "your father's an actor". Sinden's school chums understandably found this attitude objectionable, and determined to put the new boy in his place. To compound their disapproval, Donald Sinden advised against either of his sons following him into such a precarious profession as acting: university and then, if they must, a career in stage management, but not acting.

Almost inevitably, therefore, Jeremy Sinden left school for London and for the dissolute lifestyle of a young jobbing actor. He lacked the necessary narcissism to become a juvenile lead: "You have to love yourself more than most people do, and I never have," he said. But he proved to be a solid character actor with a nice sense of timing, and the ability to learn fast.

Because of his rather stocky build and patrician vowel sounds he tended to be typecast as an officer and a gentleman or a starch-ridden Englishman. To an extent he was not really acting in these parts. Sinden loved everything about English country life.

He drank Pimm's in the summer and had played croquet, the latter obsessively, since his earliest years.

He came up the traditional route through repertory theatre and two seasons with the RSC at Stratford where he worked as an assistant stage manager, and understudied 45 parts. In 1972 he made his West End debut as Private Broughton in *Journeys End*. He then made the unusual step of going back to school for some formal training on a three-year course at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. He felt this was necessary in order to iron out deficiencies in his technique.

After Lambda, Sinden appeared in four plays at the Chichester Festival. By the late 1970s he had landed the part of Anthony Mordimer in *Crossroads*, which had a huge following. But fame did not bring him much happiness. He described himself as a "lost soul" in his late twenties, deeply depressed by the break-up of a relationship with a girlfriend.

All that changed in 1978 when Sinden met Delia Lindsay, who was acting in the same play, *Lady Harry*, at the Savoy Theatre. He was 29, she 34,

and they fell in love and became engaged almost immediately. They were married in July of that year, and in the best acting tradition, Delia rushed straight from the wedding reception to the National Theatre, where she was appearing in a production of *Bedroom Farce*.

Sinden appeared in a good deal of television during the 1980s: *The Sweeney*, *Danger UXB* and *Brideshead Revisited* among them. He gave a fine comic performance as "Boy" Mulcaster, one of the Oxford set, in the latter highly acclaimed series. He asked the director if he would mind filming a difficult man-to-man talk which his character had to give to Jeremy Irons on the croquet pitch, in order to show off to viewers his sporting prowess. "It was meant to end with a particularly brilliant shot from me." But by the time the scene was filmed, winter had set in and Sinden had to play the scene over a snooker table, where he missed his shot eight times.

Denholm Elliott gave him the sensible advice to turn down no part he was offered. He still had a cherubic, chubby-cheeked face, and hardly looked old enough for the parts he was playing. He could not afford to be fussy. With this in mind, he accepted everything, and remained in steady, if unspectacular, employment throughout the 1980s.

Sinden was not really a film actor, but he played the president of the Gilbert and Sullivan society in *Chariots of Fire* (1981), and starred in John Schlesinger's *Madame Sousatzka* (1988). In 1989 he and his wife performed *An Ideal Husband* with their own touring company, and in 1994 he played Major Swindon in Shaw's *The Devil's Disciple* at the Royal National Theatre.

His real triumph was his final part as Toad in *Wind in the Willows*, a role which he took on in the autumn of last year at the Old Vic. Sadly he discovered soon afterwards, in November, that he had cancer. But in the best show-must-go-on fashion, he continued as Toad until this spring.

Sinden was an inveterate letter-writer to *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*. His advice to young actors, depressed by hostile reviewers, was to ignore them. Of one particularly waspish notice, he wrote: "While the critic caused me a somewhat uneasy breakfast, I contented myself with the knowledge that I had given him a perfectly ghastly evening."

Jeremy Sinden is survived by his wife, and their two daughters.

BERNARD SENDALL

Bernard Sendall, CBE, Deputy Director-General of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, 1958-77, died on May 25 aged 83. He was born on April 30, 1913.



BERNARD SENDALL spent his entire career in public service, first in Whitehall, then — latterly in the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) (formerly the Independent Television Authority).

He was a skilled administrator, a behind-the-scenes operator whose analysis and advice could be relied upon. But he himself was always more than content to leave the glamour and the limelight to others.

It was probably that rare combination of authority and resilience which particularly commended him to two of his masters, Winston Churchill, whom he served as private secretary in the Admiralty from 1939 to 1940, and then Churchill's protégé, Brendan Bracken, whom he served in the same capacity when Bracken became Minister of Information in 1941.

Bernard Charles Sendall was born in Malvern, Worcestershire. He went to an elementary school, of which his father was the headmaster, and then, on a scholarship to Worcester's Royal Grammar School. Like his brother, Wilfred, for many years Crossbencher of the *Sunday Express* and before that lobby correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*, he had a sharp intelligence; after Worcester Royal Grammar School he went on to Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took a first in PPE and then, in 1934-35, to Harvard. He entered the Civil Service in the Admiralty in 1935, becoming Churchill's private secretary at the outbreak of war.

He struck up a particularly close rapport with Brendan Bracken, whom he served first when Bracken was Churchill's political "Mr Fixit" at No 10, then as private secretary when Bracken became Minister of Information. It was Bracken who gave him his nickname "Sunshine" Sendall. The minister used to like to keep the adjoining door between their offices open so that he and Sendall could keep up a constant chatter as they went about their appointed tasks.

Sendall had thus served a hard apprenticeship under two of the most ebullient figures in government. He was rewarded in 1946 when he was appointed Controller (Home) of the Central Office of Information. From 1949 to 1951 he served as Controller for the Festival of Britain, then, between 1951 and 1955, he was an Assistant Secretary in the Admiralty. He had been appointed CBE in 1952.

In 1954 Sir Robert Fraser, Director-General of the Central Office of Information since 1946, was selected to be Director-General of the newly formed IBA. When, in 1955, the first Secretary of the authority returned to the Post Office, from which he had been seconded, Fraser asked Sendall, then 42, to replace him. Sendall was appointed Deputy Director-General.

His brief was to take charge of administration and to concentrate on policy questions arising from the Television Act, 1954, particularly the authority's relationship with the programme contractors.

It was a job which he accomplished with remarkable skill. The authority had before it the example of the American commercial television system, which lacked any real element of public service. Part of the authority's job was to interweave the commercial and public service elements in order that Britain should have a distinctive commercial network of better quality than that of the US.

The task was not an easy one. Some contractors, like Sidney Bernstein of Granada, needed no convincing. They accepted from the start that they had a duty to inform and educate as well as to entertain. But others needed constant reminders that showbusiness was only a part of what commercial television was supposed to be about.

Sendall's success at the IBA was due in no short measure to his skill as a committee man. He and Fraser had a clear idea of what the authority should do and Sendall was without parallel in using the committee system to further those ends. He was adept at quietly turning a committee in the direction that he himself had determined was best, though without letting the other members of the committee feel that they were being manipulated.

Part of Sendall was the austere civil servant, as reflected in the slightly severe volumes he wrote on the IBA's history, but he could be very warm and friendly. His various chiefs, particularly Bracken and Fraser, found in him a man in whom they could confide with complete confidence.

He is survived by his wife Barbara, whom he married in 1963, and by a stepson.

DUNCAN STEWART

Duncan Stewart, Fellow and tutor of Wadham College, 1955-79, Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, 1979-95, died on May 22 aged 66. He was born on February 14, 1930.



DUNCAN STEWART came as a Rhodes Scholar to Oxford not long after the war; he was to remain there to make a substantial contribution to the university in postwar years. He was the first Principal of Lady Margaret Hall when, after one hundred years as a society for women only, the college altered its statutes to admit men.

It must have seemed a formidable undertaking to guide a college through such a dramatic change in its constitution. In practice it turned out not to be such a problem, but Duncan did ponder the theory of the position and derived some comfort from the fact that when he came to retire there were more female heads of house in Oxford than there had been before colleges began to go mixed.

After moving to Zennor in 1965 he involved himself in the work of the peasant poet Henry Quick, and also edited the diary of the Zennor farmer James Stevens.

He played an active part in local life. He was the local secretary of the Council for the Protection of Rural England and as such played a vital role in the preservation of Penwith from Carnellie to Chapel Corn Brea. He was a member of the Penzance Old Cornwall Society, acting as its president five times. He was also a member of the Naturalist Trust and an active member of the West Cornwall Field Club which became the Cornwall Archaeological Society, taking part in a number of excavations.

After his retirement in 1988, he devoted much time to researching and compiling a history of his family.

He leaves a widow Audrey, who is also a Cornish Bard.

As chairman of the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board he attempted to rationalise, he was also chairman of the management committee of the language teaching centre and played an important part in establishing what has become financially, as well as academically, a great asset to the university.

From 1985 Stewart was a Rhodes trustee. He was also chairman of the curators of the university parks. As a keen gardener and a lover of trees, he took particular pleasure in this task.

In 1979 Stewart became Principal of Lady Margaret Hall. He and his wife entertained undergraduates and graduates and members of the

senior common room until they felt that they knew them. The extent to which the junior body appreciated his understanding of their interests and their problems was shown in the warmth of their response at the Gaudy in 1995 held to mark his retirement.

Although always aware of the financial dangers of an underendowed college, he was also concerned with the particular financial difficulties of its junior members and enthusiastically seconded efforts to increase accommodation and the standard of food. As befitted a Rhodes Scholar, he had been a keen rugby player and continued to hope that LMH would produce a Blue. He watched with interest the steady ascent of the LMH boys up the Torpids and Eights tables but he also realised that, for sport to flourish, grounds — and boathouse must be provided — a female as well as a male requirement — and so they were, by judicious alliance with another college.

Stewart had many interests. He loved opera and shared with his wife an interest in modern painting. He was fond of France, its language, its food and its wine. It is said that he had so little time to enjoy the house which he built in Headington that in Turn at Garonne where he and his wife had planned to spend half the year.

Stewart had always intended to retire early, arguing that 15 years was as long as a head of house could be useful. He was a man of great courage, moral as well as physical, and a figure of total probity. If one sensed sometimes a certain reticence there was also abundant friendliness. "Affable" is the word the 17th century would have used to describe him.

He is survived by his wife and a daughter and son.

PETER POOL



Peter Pool, solicitor and Cornish historian, died of cancer of the pancreas on May 15 aged 63. He was born on March 16, 1933.

A BARD of the Gorsedd of Cornwall for forty years, Peter Pool, who took Gwas Galva as his bardic name, was a master of his county's ancient Brittonic tongue. A keen exponent of unified Cornish, he devoted himself to its revival. He was a member of Agan Tavas (Our Tongue) and the founder and first secretary of the Cornish Language Board. He took a passionate part in the controversy which sur-

facted in recent years about alternative forms of the language, writing in *The Second Death of Cornish*, his recent booklet: "I appealed to all sections of the revival movement to work out some form of compromise and save our cause from ruin; my reward was to be lampooned as a dinosaur. The time has come for this dinosaur to roar."

Pool was also a scholar of the history and archaeology of Cornwall. He wrote numerous articles and pamphlets on local historical and antiquarian topics and was twice awarded the Henwood Medal of the Royal Institute of Corn-

wall for his contribution to journals. His books include *A History of the Town and Borough of Penzance* published in 1974 and a 1988 biography of William Borlase. Peter Aubrey Seymour Pool was born in Penzance. His father ran a family engineering business at Hayle, and Peter was educated locally at St Erbyn's School before going on to Kettle College, Oxford, where he studied for a degree in Law.

It was while he was practising as a solicitor in London that he first began to take a serious interest in the ancient language of his county. He

began to attend weekly lessons with the second Grand Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd. A dedicated student, he soon went on himself to teach Cornish in London, and based his book *Cornish for Beginners* around his experience.

In the 1950s Pool returned to Cornwall, as he had always wished to do, and set up his own firm of solicitors. However, he still found time to pursue his scholarly pursuits. He published a pamphlet, *The Typography of the Penheleg Manuscript*, which dealt with a document written in the 16th century by the Head Bailiff of the Arundells of Labeine. Pool had come across this manuscript quite by chance under the bed of a butcher in St Buryan.

After moving to Zennor in 1965 he involved himself in the work of the peasant poet Henry Quick, and also edited the diary of the Zennor farmer James Stevens.

He played an active part in local life. He was the local secretary of the Council for the Protection of Rural England and as such played a vital role in the preservation of Penwith from Carnellie to Chapel Corn Brea. He was a member of the Penzance Old Cornwall Society, acting as its president five times. He was also a member of the Naturalist Trust and an active member of the West Cornwall Field Club which became the Cornwall Archaeological Society, taking part in a number of excavations.

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He leaves a widow Audrey, who is also a Cornish Bard.

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NEWS

Israeli poll threatens peace process

Israel's election remained on a knife-edge last night with Binyamin Netanyahu, the right-wing challenger, ready to cause a dramatic upset if votes of more than 100,000 serving Israeli soldiers confirm his slender lead over Shimon Peres, the incumbent Labour Prime Minister.

As projections of Mr Peres's slender overnight lead were reversed in favour of Mr Netanyahu, the future of the Middle East peace process hung in the balance. Pages 1, 14

Vogue attacked over 'skeletal' models

The Omega watch company has withdrawn advertisements from *Vogue* magazine in protest at the use of "distasteful" pictures of a "skeletal" model in its June edition which it claimed could exert a harmful influence on young and impressionable readers. Page 1

Blair's salvation

Peter Thomson, an Australian priest who is Tony Blair's spiritual mentor, has flown halfway round the world from his cattle ranch to be by the Labour leader's side in the run-up to the general election. Page 1

Road deaths fall

The number of road deaths fell last year to the lowest level since records began in the 1920s, putting the British second only to the Norwegians as the safest drivers in the world. Page 6

Luck of the Irish

Irish people living in Britain have much higher mortality rates than the natives, even if they were born here, according to a study published in the *British Medical Journal*. Page 10

Slim support for EU

Yesterday's MORI poll for *The Times* shows that, by a small majority, the public still favours British membership of the EU but opposes further measures of integration. Page 11

China travel fears

The Foreign Office has issued a new warning to travellers in China about increasing attacks on foreigners. Page 12

Clinton escapes

President Clinton averted more damaging headlines by partially acceding to a demand for "Travelgate" documents just hours before a vote to hold the White House in contempt of Congress. Page 13

Smugglers stung

An FBI "sting" netted seven arms dealers who appeared to be importing weapons from the Chinese armed forces. Page 15

Agonising wait

Parents waited for up to five hours to hear whether their children had survived the massacre at Dunblane Primary School the inquiry heard. Page 14

Fish fightback

Britain has delivered a forthright rejection of European Union proposals to slash the national fishing fleet and ministers said they would not comply with the proposed 40 per cent cut. Page 2

Thomson freed

Sara Thomson was convicted of the manslaughter of her drunken husband and, after walking free from court, said she had been fairly punished. Page 3

Dental inquiry

A doctor who gave anaesthetic to a schoolgirl who died in the dentist's chair told an inquest that one of his machines was broken during the operation. Page 3

Marquess to leave

The Marquess of Bristol has sold off ancient titles and plans to leave the family seat at Ickworth in Suffolk, and build a new life in the Bahamas. Page 5

Bulldozers fill in the 'passion pits'

Drive-in movie theatres, a beacon of Americana since the 1940s and scene of countless first kisses, are on the brink of extinction. Even in California's San Fernando Valley, once the drive-in capital of the United States, only one remains and in Fresno the last of its many "passion pits" is to be bulldozed. Page 13



After one of the coldest Mays on record, children take advantage of finer weather to play in the Trafalgar Square fountains yesterday

BUSINESS

Economy: The British economy will grow by only 2 per cent this year but is set fair for healthy growth and low inflation. Page 23

Midland: Directors at the parent company of Midland Bank look set to back down over their controversial £16 million incentive scheme after intense pressure from shareholders. Page 23

Inside: A former executive of Bankers Trust responsible for ensuring that the bank's employees did not break the law has been charged with insider dealing. Page 23

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index fell 29.0 points to close at 3746.7. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 85.4 to 85.7 after a rise from \$1.5189 to \$1.5342 and from DM2.3472 to DM2.3507. Page 26

SPORT

Tennis: The straight-sets win by Michael Stich over Greg Rusedski suggests he could challenge for the French Open title. Page 44

Football: The Football League agreed a £25 million three-year sponsorship with the Nationwide Building Society to add to a £125-million, five-year television deal. Page 44

Cricket: The umpires had to intervene when David Capel brandished his bat at Dermot Reeve and Keith Piper during the match between Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. Page 40

Sailing: Samantha Brewster's bid to sail solo around the world is facing an unexpected obstacle in Chay Blyth, who wants his boat back. Page 44

ARTS

Deck chairs: A pastiche musical, *Dames at Sea*, is the hit of this year's Covent Garden Festival. "It's unashamedly aimed at an audience which loves the Warner musicals of the 1930s." John Higgins writes. Page 31

Doing the Bie: With dozens of record companies competing to sign them up, Bie is symptomatic of a new wave of bright British teenage bands. Page 32

Quiet flows the Nile: Only three albums in 12 years, but the new release from Blue Nile is full of intelligent songs. Page 33

Orfeo danced: Mark Morris has presented his danced version of Gluck's opera *Orfeo* in New York. Prior to this summer's Edinburgh Festival. Page 31

FEATURES

Valerie Grove talks to Robert Fox, producer and younger brother of Edward and James, who, his mother says, is actually the best looking of the three. Page 16

Boos for you: Have I got News for You thrives on unfortunate guest appearances such as the one last week by Piers Morgan, Editor of the *Daily Mirror*. Page 17

Resident alien: At 87 Quentin Crisp, for all his gay declarations and controversial life, still retains a characteristically English self-restraint. Page 17

EDUCATION

Literacy war: Evidence published earlier this week shows that Britain is slipping further down the competitiveness league table to nineteenth place, with Chile and Taiwan among the countries ahead of us. Page 35

Hearing for the deaf: Parents of a deaf child are challenging Hampshire County Council's decision to send her to the local comprehensive rather than to a school for deaf children. Page 35

THE PAPERS

The McDougal-Tucker convictions, the upcoming bank-fraud case, and any others that might arise from Mr Starr's ongoing and very active investigation, have everything to do with the President and First Lady. — *Washington Times*

TV LISTINGS

Preview: Jack Dee and Jeremy Hardy pool their comedy talents. *Jack and Jeremy's Real Lives* (Channel 4, 10.30pm) **Review:** Lynne Truss sees the SAS enjoying a good massacre. Page 43

OPINION

Likud's opportunity

If Binyamin Netanyahu becomes Israel's leader, he will have a mandate to negotiate from strength. He should use it. Page 19

Primary lessons

The biggest educational scandal of this Government is that it has allowed teacher training colleges, for the past 17 years, to turn out teachers who have not been taught how to teach. Page 19

To the manor pawned

Lordships of the manor convey no right to a seat in the House of Lords. These cracked baubles bestow little more than rights to graze on land long built over. Page 19

COLUMNS

BERNARD LEVIN

Would you like a few dozen slaves for Christmas? Yes, yes, and yes again. I am talking about the horrors of Sudan, which may well at present hold the Blue Riband of savagery. Page 18

SARAH BAXTER

Labour's Euro-enthusiasts and sceptics have little in common except the desire not to stick their necks out on any given European controversy. That unity may not be sustained for long, based as it is on the politics of the lowest common denominator. Page 18

PETER RIDDELL

The British public favours a tough line over the beef crisis, is becoming more sceptical about Europe, but is unwilling to give any credit to the Government, according to yesterday's MORI poll. Page 11

OBITUARIES

Jeremy Sinden, actor: Bernard Sinden, Deputy Director-General of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, Duncan Stewart, Principal of Lady Margaret Hall; Peter Pool, solicitor and Cornish historian. Page 21

LETTERS

Devolution and nationalism: the view from the Moon; disclosure of criminal records; investment in Burma. Page 19

EURO 96
England

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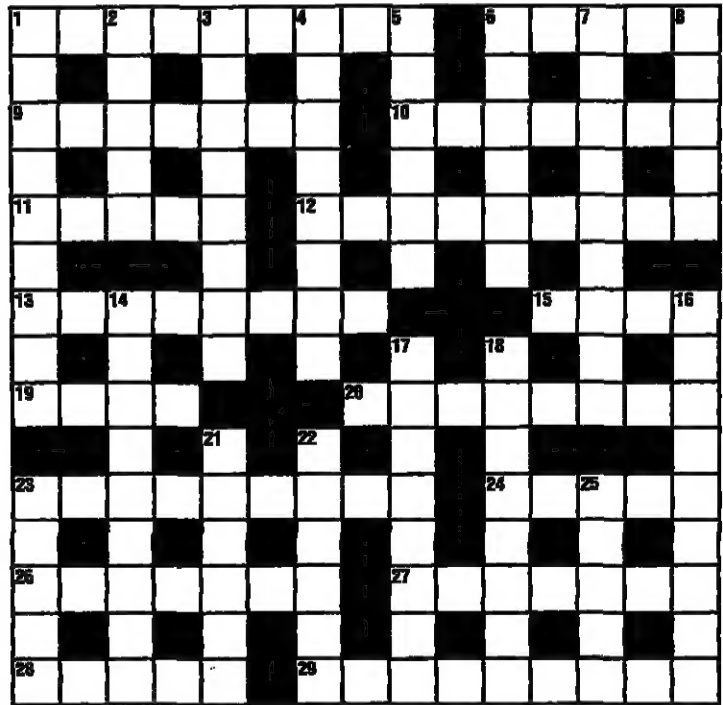
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

EURO 96 TICKETS
Your chance to win pairs of tickets to the European championship

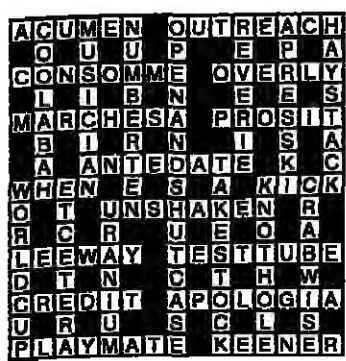
PLUS:
Special offers on 16 summer events and VIP tickets to Henley Royal Regatta to be won

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,182



- ACROSS**
- Historian brings wicked king back to us (9).
 - Engineers almost broke puzzle (5).
 - Bang out when there's disorder? It may (7).
 - Operating as a policeman is (2,5).
 - Rank actors by voice (5).
 - I wondered vaguely what might be on tonight (9).
 - Road undulates round river channels (8).
 - Be wholly against a cask remaining unfinished (4).
 - Collar - put on one from another suit (4).
 - Covered ends of dungaree, having unravelled (8).
 - To find fault, here comes the craftsman (9).
 - Some held King George to be mad (5).
- DOWN**
- Where child is made to eat up? (4,5).
 - Magic symbols put spell on opponents in game (5).
 - Bishop said no movement should capture the church (8).
 - Note the colour is made fast (8).
 - Independent enters reserved row (6).
 - Club shows improvement (6).
 - Cumbrian lad who works in the market? (6,3).
 - Grim film we abandoned (5).
 - Allusion from judge about new start for criminal (9).
 - The likes of Paddington can provide boy with transport (5,4).
 - Arrested criminal with sharp teeth (8).
 - Manual worker (8).
 - Labourer in the French port (6).
 - Class issue (6).
 - Cooper's first to get requests to make these (5).
 - Grim and corrupt birthplace of Lancastrian (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,181



TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0801 500 followed by the appropriate code

Greater London	701
Kent/Surrey/Sussex	702
Devon/Hants & IOW	703
Devon & Cornwall	704
Wiltshire/Avon/Somerset	705
Berks/Bucks/Oxon	706
Bedfordshire & Essex	707
Northants/Suffolk/Cambs	708
West Mid & Shropshire & Gwent	709
Shropshire/Hertford & Wores	710
Central Midlands	711
East Midlands	712
Lincoln & Humberside	713
Dyfed & Powys	714
Gwynedd & Ceredigion	715
N.W. England	716
W. & S. Wales & Ireland	717
N.E. England	718
Cumbria & Lake District	719
S.W. Scotland	720
W. Central Scotland	721
Edin & Fife/Lothian & Borders	722
E. Central Scotland	723
Grampian & E. Highlands	724
N.W. Scotland	725
Caithness/Orkney & Shetland	726
N. Ireland	727

Weathercall is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic/roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0336 401 followed by the appropriate code

London & SE traffic/roadworks	731
Essex/Herts/Beds/Bucks/Berks/Oxon	732
Kent/Surrey/Sussex/Hants	733
M25 London Orbital only	734
National traffic/roadworks	735
National motorways	736
West Country	737
Wales	738
North Wales	739
East Angles	740
North-west England	741
North-east England	742
Scotland	743
North Ireland	744
AA Roadwatch is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.	745

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp Gravesend, Kent, 28°C (82°F); lowest day temp Orkney, Shetland, 10°C (50°F); highest rainfall Valley, Anglesey, 0.47in; highest sunshine Jersey, 12 hr

FORECAST

General: England and Wales will have sunny spells and showers, mainly in the west at first but developing inland, parts of the South East may stay dry. It will be windy, especially in the North, with temperatures about the seasonal average. Scotland and Northern Ireland will be windy with blustery showers, perhaps rain in northwest Scotland; eastern Scotland will be sunnier; temperatures a little below normal.

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England: sunny spells, scattered showers developing. Wind southwesterly, fresh occasionally strong. Fresher, max 20C (68F).

W Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Central N: sunny spells and showers. Wind southwesterly, fresh to strong. Fresher, max 18C (61F).

Lake District, Isle of Man, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, Ireland: sunny intervals and blustery showers, some heavy, possibly hail or thunder. Wind south or south-west, strong to gale. Max 15C (59F).

NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: dry start, showers developing. Wind south or south-west, strong to gale. Max 15C (59F).

NW Scotland: cloudy, blustery showers or rain. Wind south to southwest, gale, perhaps severe gale at times. Max 13C (55F).

Outlook: sunny spells and showers, rain on Sunday in South West; average temperatures.

Pollen forecast: low in the North, Scotland and Northern Ireland; low to moderate in London, the South East, the South West, East Anglia, Midlands and Wales.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=brilliant; c=cloud; d=dreizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dust; f=fog; lg=log; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=showers; si=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

Area	Sun	Rain	Max	Min	Wind	Sea
Abertawe	0.4	0.04	13	8	r	1
Anglesey	0.3	0.18	30	8	r	1
Armagh	0.7	0.10	14	10	r	1
Belfast	0.7	0.27	15	9	r	1
Birmingham	0.6	0.09	24	7	s	1
Bristol	0.8	0.08	19	10	r	1
Cardiff	0.5	0.01	21	7	s	1
Cardigan	0.5	0.26	24	7	s	1
Colwyn Bay	0.3	0.16	23	7	b	1
Cromer	0.3	0.01	23	7	b	1
Durham	0.6	0.22	14	5	r	1
Edinburgh	0.9	0.19	8	6	s	1
Exeter	0.2	0.22	18	6	r	1
Falmouth	0.1	0.15	14	5	du	1
Gloucester	0.3	0.20	19	8	s	1
Grimsby	0.7	0.39	15	5	r	1
Huddersfield	0.9	0.01	21	7	s	1
Leeds	0.6	0.17	17	6	s	1
London	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1
Manchester	0.4	0.10	24	7	s	1
Nottingham	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1
Orkney	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1
Shetland	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1
Southampton	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1
Swansea	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1
Torquay	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1
Weymouth	0.1	0.37	13	5	r	1

ABROAD

Ajaccio	22	72	Corfu	24	75	Malaga	24	75	Rome	21	70
Alexandria	24	75	Copenhagen	9	48	Madrid	25	77	S. Francisco	14	57
Algiers	36	97	Dublin	15	59	Moscow	25	77	S. Paulo	21	70
Amsterdam	17	61	Frankfurt	20	68	Paris	25	77	Santiago	14	57
Athens	19	66	Helsinki	22	72	Seoul	22	72	Sao Paulo	28	82
Bahia	16	61	London	10	50	Shanghai	22	72	Singapore	28	82
Bangkok	33	91	Lyons	19	63	Stockholm	22	72	Sydney	18	63
Barcelona	22	72	Madrid	25	77	Taipei	22	72	Tokyo	27	81
Berlin	24	75	Manila	32	90	Toronto	22	72	Winnipeg	15	58
Bombay	10	50	Mexico City	25	77	Yokohama	22	72			
Buenos Aires	15	59	N. York	16	61						
Calcutta	26	79	Osaka	22	72						
Cairo	26	79	Seoul	22	72						
Cardiff	24	75	Shanghai	22	72						
Chennai	24	75	Singapore	28	82						
Columbo	24	75	Sydney	18	63						
Dhaka	24	75	Taipei	22	72						
Dublin	15	59	Tokyo	27	81						
Edinburgh	9	48	Toronto	22	72						
Falmouth	15	59	Winnipeg	15	58						
Gloucester	19	66	Yokohama	22	72						
Huddersfield	19	66									
Leeds	19	66									
London	10	50									
Lyons	19	63									
Madrid	25	77									
Manila	32	90									
Mexico City	25	77									

Temperatures at midday local time Wednesdays. X = not available.